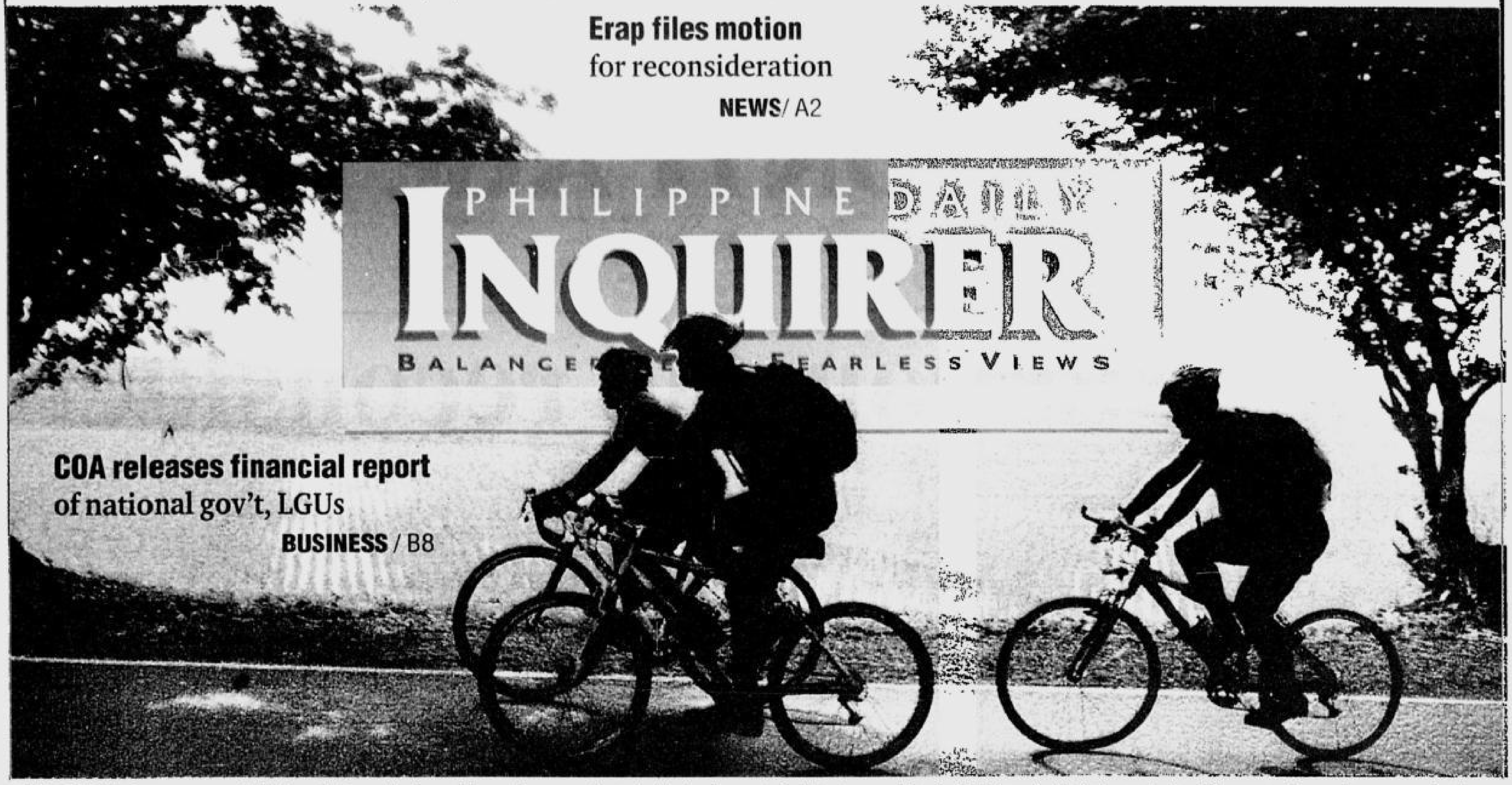
Thursday, September 27, 2007 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 291 P18 website: www.inquirer.net



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Erap files motion
for reconsideration
NEWS/ A2

COA releases financial report
of national gov't, LGUs
BUSINESS / B8

CYCLE OF LIFE: On an expanse of a highway in Baras, Rizal, consider a microcosm of sustainable development: Cyclists, trees and the ricefields breathe life into each other. The greeneries produce oxygen for the cyclists who in turn breathe out carbon dioxide which plants need to grow to nourish life and living. EUGENE ARANETA

'Sec, may 200 ka dito'

Neri says Abalos offered him ₱200M

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Dona Pazzibugan

DROPPING A BOMBSHELL THAT HAD BEEN ticking days before his Senate testimony, Romulo Neri named his briber and gave a figure. But upon "instruction" from Malacañang, he kept the rest to himself.

While they were riding on a golf cart, Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. offered him P200 million, Neri yesterday said, confirming reports that the $329-million contract for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project was tainted with attempts to bribe certain people to facilitate the approval of the project.

"Sec, *may two hundred ka dito* (Secretary, you have 200 here)," Neri quoted Abalos as telling him during the third Senate hearing on the controversial deal awarded to China's ZTE Corp.

"I was shocked because I am not used to being offered and it was quite big," he said.

Neri was the socioeconomic planning secretary and director general of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) when the NBN project was approved early this year.

The project sought to build a broadband network linking state agencies and local government units nationwide.

Neri, now chair of the Commission on Higher Education

SEC/ A18

Certified nerd and geek loves classical music, speaks Chinese

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

HE SPEAKS FLUENT CHINESE and loves classical music. He is deeply religious, a certified nerd and by most accounts an honest, true-blue technocrat with a modest, unpretentious lifestyle.

Romulo Neri, erstwhile director general of the National Economic Development Authority, even brought his own brown bag containing hamburger sandwich and fresh green salad to the weekly Cabinet meetings at Malacañang's state dining room served by the Palace kitchen staff.

The 57-year-old bachelor born in Tagbilaran, Bohol, proudly told reporters how he had been sending his nephews to

CERTIFIED/ A18

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH: Neri (right): "I was shocked because first, I'm not used to being offered ... Second, "medyo malaki" (it's quite big). Abalos: I can't recall. What would be my reason to offer a bribe? EDWIN BACASMAS

What Neri could not say; invokes executive privilege

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

WHAT ROMULO NERI DID NOT, OR COULD not, say at yesterday's Senate hearing constituted a point of intrigue for the senators and guests: Why did President Macapagal-Arroyo continue to favor ZTE Corp.'s proposal despite the bribe allegedly offered to him?

The former director general of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) evaded questions about Ms Arroyo's decision on the $329-million National Broadband Network deal by invoking "executive privilege."

Eventually, Neri said it was Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita who had instructed him to invoke the privilege under Ms Arroyo's Executive Order No. 464.

But later in Malacañang, Ermita said it was Neri who had chosen to invoke executive privilege.

Asked by Sen. Pia Cayetano whether the

WHAT NERI/ A9

Solons cross party lines; impeach rap vs Abalos on

By Beverly T. Natividad, Norman Bordadora and Christian V. Esguerra

A MOVE TO IMPEACH COMMISSION on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos takes off today.

Iloilo Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico, a former lawmaker, told a Senate inquiry yesterday he will file the impeachment case at the House of Representatives at 11 this morning.

Suplico announced his move following allegations that Abalos had tried to bribe former Socioeconomic Planning

SOLONS/ A19

Administration senators gang up on JDV III, Neri

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Fe Zamora

ADMINISTRATION SENATORS CLOSED ranks and tried to denigrate yesterdays's Senate inquiry into the National Broadband Network (NBN) controversy as a mere spectacle of conflicting claims and a confrontation between "mafiosis" fighting for their share of kickbacks.

But as far as civil society and the

ADMINISTRATION/ A19

Man who 'threatened' Neri over port deal

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WITH HIS FIERCE ADVOCACY for the liberalization of Manila's lucrative but monopolistic port services, Romulo Neri has allegedly earned the ire of Enrique Razon, chair and president of International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI).

Neri named the powerful businessman as the one who threatened him against allowing a rival to get into Manila's port business.

Neri told yesterday's Senate hearing that he had come "face

MAN WHO/ A9

KAWAWA NAMAN ANG MGA PUMIPIYOK!

Deep-voiced men have more kids, says US study

WASHINGTON—MEN with deep voices have more children, probably because they attract more mates, the lead author of what is said to be the first study to examine the relationship between voice and number of offspring said Tuesday.

"We found a relationship between men's voice

DEEP-VOICED/ A10

4 killed, 5 hurt as Burma junta fires on protesters

RANGOON—GOVERNMENT troops on Wednesday fired shots over the heads of large crowds in the main city of Burma (Myanmar), as the military junta intensified its crackdown on the biggest prodemocracy demonstrations in 20 years.

Four persons, including three monks, were killed and five were wounded by bullets in Rangoon (Yangon), a hospital source said as decades of pent-up frustration at 45 years of unbroken military rule in the former Burma produced the largest crowds yet during a month of protests.

Two of the monks were beaten to death while another was shot when he tried to wrestle a gun away from a soldier and the weapon discharged, two senior Myanmar officials told AFP.

They said the monks were killed near Yangon's Shwedagon Pagoda, Myanmar's holiest site and a key rallying point for the clergy leading the nine days of protests which have spread across the Southeast Asian nation.

A fourth man, who was not a monk, was shot dead, a hospital source said.

Some witnesses estimated 100,000 people took to the streets on Wednesday despite fears of a repeat of the ruthless suppression of Burma's last major uprising, in 1988, when soldiers opened fire, killing an estimated 3,000 people.

The protests, which began a month ago after the junta jacked up fuel prices, have become a mass movement against military repression and economic hardship. *(See related stories in The World, Page A24.)*

4 KILLED/ A10

HOME OF PEOPLE POWER: In the birthplace of people power, members of the Free Burma Coalition rally at the Burmese Embassy in Makati in solidarity with the protesters in that country who are now on their 10th day of demonstrating their defiance to the ruling military junta. REM ZAMORA

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST:Central and Southern Luzon, the whole Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Mostly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Mostly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Mostly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Mostly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Mostly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Mostly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	**Davao**	Mostly Cloudy

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Second FrontPage

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(In exact order)

Mid-Day **SUERTRES** Evening
0 8 7 | 1 4 6

MEGALOTTO 6/45
5 7 8 20 29 35
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Erap asks court to reconsider

Motion seeks to reverse plunder conviction

By Jocelyn R. Uy

CONVICTED FORMER PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada filed yesterday a motion at the Sandiganbayan to overturn his conviction for plunder.

The motion, filed by Estrada's lawyers, said his conviction should be overturned on the grounds that he was denied his constitutional rights when he was sentenced to life imprisonment on Sept. 12.

Malacañang immediately welcomed Estrada's decision to seek a reconsideration of the antigraft court's verdict convicting him of plunder.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Estrada was just availing of judicial relief.

"Let's wait for a legal case as it develops now that he files a motion for reconsideration," said Ermita.

The 70-year-old Estrada, who was found guilty of illegally amassing a personal fortune amounting to several millions of pesos through insider trading of stocks and payoffs from jueteng operators, has claimed innocence.

A summary of Wednesday's motion said Estrada had not been informed of the nature of the charges against him and had been deprived of his right to confront witnesses.

"The accused was denied the constitutional presumption of innocence as the court convicted him on the basis of surmises, inferences and speculative evidence," Estrada's lawyers said.

Court spokesperson Renato Bocar said they would immediately examine the motion.

Estrada's lawyers Jose Flaminiano and Anna Liza Logan filed the motion at 2 p.m. yesterday. They were accompanied by Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, acting spokesperson of the former president.

"Only those who love themselves more than they love the truth will not be minded to change their opinion. But we believe that the justices love the truth that is why we dared to file this motion in the hope that they will study our motion and ultimately reverse its judgment," Flaminiano told reporters yesterday.

The 62-page motion for reconsideration came a day after Estrada postponed action on the proposed pardon being offered by Malacañang and 24 hours before his conviction would have become final and executory.

Estrada has said he will accept a pardon from his successor, President Macapagal-Arroyo, but only if it is unconditional.

Ermita, however, clarified that President Arroyo was not yet offering Estrada a pardon, and that Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno was merely testing the waters.

"What Puno is doing is try to explore, "but he has no instruction to offer (a pardon to Estrada) ... just to find out how does he feel about it," Ermita said.

"The Palace is not convincing former President Estrada to accept a pardon," said Ermita, noting that the "grant of pardon is premised on the finality of the decision."

Estrada was convicted on two illegal acts that constituted the plunder charge slapped against him—his systematic collection of P545 million in jueteng payoffs and his receipt of a P189-million commission from the purchase of Belle Corp. shares using state pension funds.

The court, however, did not find Estrada liable for his alleged kickbacks of P130 million from the tobacco excise tax and P3.2 billion in deposits in the "Jose Velarde" account. *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and AFP*

RP falls in world corruption index

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES HAS FAILED to make significant strides in curbing corruption in the past year, placing its ranking at a low 131st out of 180 countries assessed in terms of good governance, according to the latest corruption perceptions report of the Berlin-based Transparency International.

The country's ranking dropped by 10 notches in the 2007 corruption perception index (CPI) of Transparency International, against its 121st place the previous year, although its overall score of 2.5 stood unchanged.

The anticorruption watchdog's report is compiled from surveys of perceptions of public sector corruption in 180 countries and territories—the widest coverage of any corruption index to date—and is a composite index that draws on 14 expert opinion surveys.

The CPI scores countries on a scale of zero to 10, with zero indicating high levels of perceived corruption and 10 indicating low levels of perceived corruption.

The Philippines shared the 131st slot with five other countries which obtained a similar score—Yemen, Burundi, Iran, Honduras and Libya.

Compared to other Southeast Asian economies, the Philippines scored much lower than Thailand's 3.3 and Malaysia's 5.1, a notch lower than Vietnam's 2.6 and a notch higher than Indonesia's 2.3.

The report said a strong correlation between corruption and poverty continued to be evident, as 40 percent of those scoring below 3—which indicates that corruption is perceived as rampant—are classified by the World Bank as low-income countries.

Somalia and Burma scored lowest at 1.4, while Denmark shared the top score of 9.4 with perennial high-flyers Finland and New Zealand.

The Philippines is classified by the World Bank as a middle-income country.

"Despite some gains, "corruption remains an enormous drain on resources sorely needed for education, health and infrastructure," said Huguette Labelle, chair of Transparency International.

"Low-scoring countries need to take these results seriously and act now to strengthen accountability in public institutions. But action from top-scoring countries is just as important, particularly in cracking down on corrupt activity in the private sector," Labelle said.

The world's top scorers New Zealand, Denmark and Finland were followed by Singapore and Sweden, both of which scored 9.3.

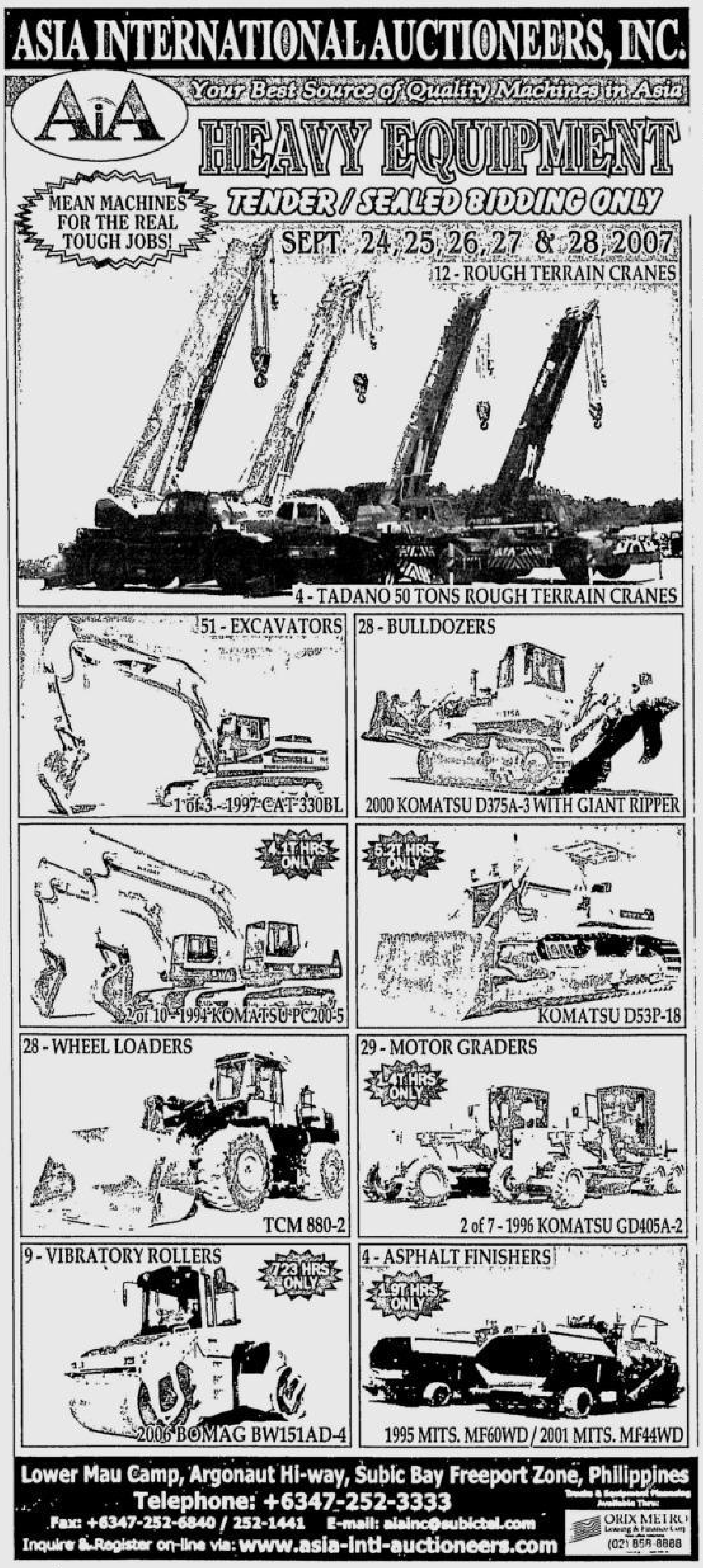
But Transparency International said the CPI's top scorers were implicated in poor-country corruption as multinational companies and financial institutions based in rich countries that use bribery and tolerate illicitly gained wealth are helping fuel corruption in the world's poorest countries.

WHAT'S INSIDE

WIFE TO PRESS kidnap raps vs Mark Jimenez /A7

2 SOLDIERS SLAIN in Basilan clash /A7

HOUSE BODY ENDS hearings on cheap medicines bill /A5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TCM 880-2
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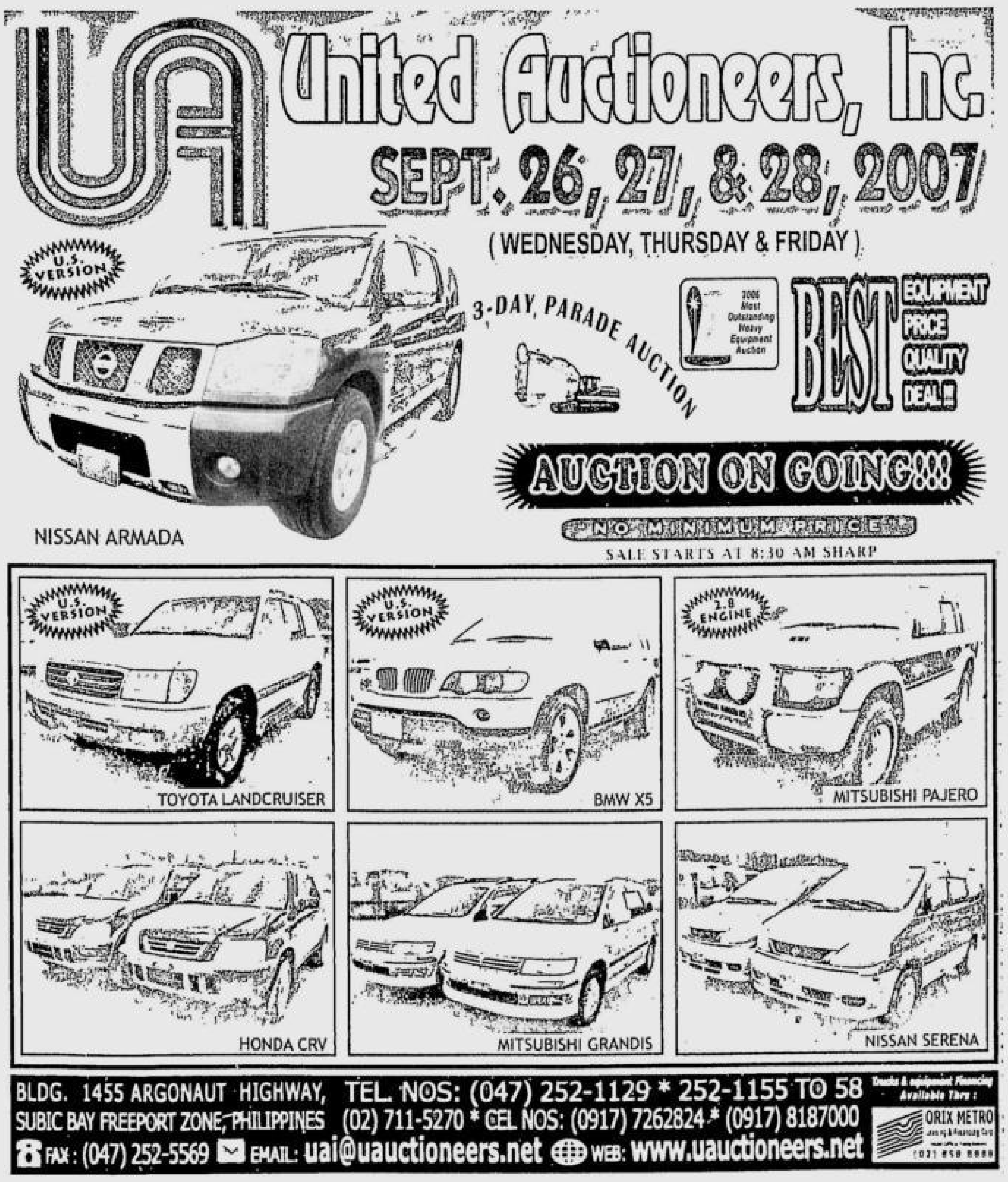
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ORIX METRO

Senate to defend Hello Garci probe to SC

THE SENATE WILL have to defend before the Supreme Court its decision to hold investigative hearings on the "Hello Garci" controversy involving the alleged wiretapped conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and an election official.

The high court has scheduled oral arguments next week on the petition filed by two retired Court of Appeals justices to stop the Senate hearings for being violative of the Constitution and the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

The oral arguments have been scheduled for Oct. 2, at 1 p.m.

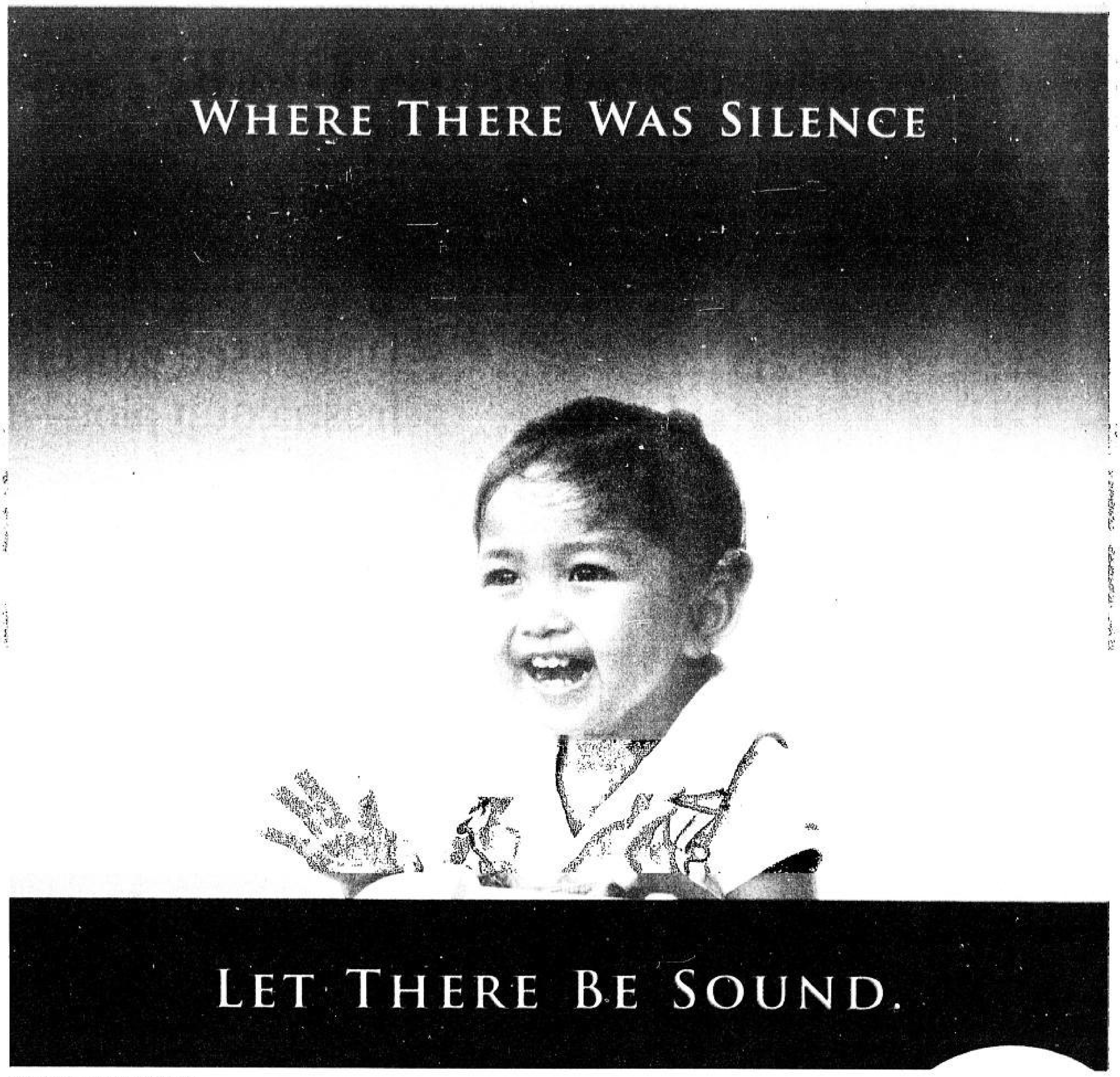
The retired appellate court justices, Santiago Ranada and Oswaldo Agcaoili, asked the high court to stop the Senate investigations on the "Hello Garci" controversy, saying the issue would divide the country.

They sought a temporary restraining order, and later, a permanent injunction against the hearings.

Ranada and Agcaoili said the Anti-Wiretapping Law prohibits the mere possession and use of wiretapped materials, as well as any discussion of their contents.

They also invoked the constitutional provision that Congress should only conduct probes in aid of legislation and that the rights of persons appearing or affected by such investigations should be respected.

They said the Senate also has no valid rules for such an inquiry. The rules of procedure on such inquiries in aid of legislation have to be published first to ensure that the rights of persons appearing in them are respected, they said. *Leila B. Salaverria*



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US businessmen still bullish on RP, says envoy

By Alcuin Papa

UNITED STATES BUSINESSmen are still bullish on the Philippines despite the controversy surrounding the national broadband deal involving China, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney said yesterday.

In a talk with reporters, Kenney said the Philippines is still a good place to do business for US companies.

"It's a great place to do business because the quality of employees you get in the Philippines is second to none. Filipinos are energetic and dedicated. And so most of our companies are very happy here," Kenney said.

She also said that US businesses are "very enthusiastic" about coming to the Philippines. In fact, Kenney said she was flying to Cebu to hold a showcase for American companies looking for local partners.

"The project we're launching next week in Cebu is American companies are here looking for Philippine partners to do business in the country. That's pretty exciting for me," she said.

Also, Kenney said Americans still feel safer in the Philippines despite other countries issuing travel advisories for their citizens.

"Americans feel increasingly safer here in the Philippines, the [Philippine National Police] has done a wonderful job of looking after the really many difficult issues that face every police force in the world today [like] drug trafficking, trafficking of persons, terrorism, all the way on down to road safety," Kenney said.

Kenney was at Camp Crame yesterday to sign a memorandum of agreement for US assistance to renovate PNP training facilities around the country.

Initially, Kenney said the US will provide approximately P11.2 million to renovate PNP training facilities in General Santos City. The facilities will be used to train PNP operatives in antinarcotics operations. The facilities include sleeping quarters, dining rooms, classrooms, shooting and tactical ranges.

'OPLAN ALAGA' IN CEBU

On September 8, the Philippine Daily Inquirer with advocacy partner United Laboratories Inc. (UNILAB) conducted its first Newsboy Medical Mission in Provincial Capitol of Cebu City. With the help of doctors from Cebu Doctor College, Ms. Tess Ybanez, Cebu newspaper dealer and Cebu Daily News employees who offered free services, this mission was successfully launched and over 160 newsboys and their families were served.

Dismissed officers behind fresh coup plot – Esperon

By Nikko Dizon

MILITARY CHIEF GEN. HERMOGENES Esperon Jr. yesterday accused dismissed military officers of being behind the ongoing recruitment of soldiers for a fresh plot to topple the government.

Esperon said the officers were closely identified with the group of Marines and Scout Rangers officers currently detained in military camps for allegedly leading the aborted February 2006 coup plot.

"The reported recruiters, who are by the way dismissed officers, are very much connected to the group that would have launched the adventurism in February 2006... There are attempts from that group," Esperon told reporters.

Esperon was apparently alluding to the group of former Marine commandant, Major Gen. Renato Miranda, his classmate at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), former Scout Ranger chief, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, and Marine Col. Ariel Querubin.

Lim and Querubin had supposedly planned to withdraw support from President Macapagal-Arroyo on Feb. 24. Miranda allegedly knew of the plan.

Querubin and other Marine officials protested Miranda's sudden relief as Marine commandant on Feb. 26, leading to a standoff at the Marine headquarters in Fort Bonifacio.

The three are now facing court-martial proceedings.

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THE PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF INTERIOR DESIGNERS
THE ACCREDITED PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR INTERIOR DESIGNERS
Member: APSDA & IFI

a paradigm of Sense & Style

43rd anniversary

"Keynote Speaker: Hon. Miguel Zubiri"
Senator

DATE: September 27, 2007 ; Thursday
TIME: 5:00 p.m. registration
PLACE: Manila A & B, Shangri-la Hotel Makati
Gentlemen: Strictly formal
Ladies: Ultra-glamourous attire

Congratulations to the officers and members of The Philippine Institute of Interior Designers (PIID) as you hold your 43rd Anniversary.

Interior Design is an art whose aim is to achieve a well-balanced, attractive and safe interior in homes and establishments. Over the years, you have worked to promote the professional competence of your members, who are all qualified because of education and experience.

As the only recognized organization of professional interior designers in the country, may you continue to practice the highest standards of professionalism so that you can be at par with your counterparts in other countries.

I can proudly claim that Filipino ingenuity is unparalleled and world-class.

More power and Mabuhay!

It is my distinct pleasure to offer my warmest greetings to the Philippine Institute of Interior Designers on this celebration of your *43rd Anniversary.*

I salute the PIID for its many years of service and leadership of the interior design profession. It has proven itself a valuable partner of the Professional Regulation Commission in its mission vision to raise and uphold standards of professional ethics and conduct.

Throughout its existence, the PIID has made valuable contributions towards showcasing Filipino artistry and design through its vigilant espousal of professional standards in interior design. It has encouraged the evolution of a unique Filipino style with its blending of Eastern and Western elements and opened portals of opportunity for our young designers to practice their profession here and abroad, thereby raising the credentials of Filipino interior designers to world class caliber.

It is my hope that the PIID and its members continue to represent the best of our country's style and promote pride in Philippine artistry. May the PIID reflect the spirit of hope and flair that is so uniquely Filipino. I personally look forward to brighter achievements from the PIID and from our Filipino interior designers.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

I am pleased to extend my warmest congratulations to the officers and members of the Philippine Institute of Interior Designers on the occasion of its 43rd Anniversary.

Your theme, "A Paradigm of Sense & Style," is in itself a strong statement of the PIID's sole claim to legitimacy as an organization in this specialized field, and serves to affirm its sincere commitment to pursue the highest standards of excellence in the field of Interior Design.

For over four decades now, your organization has remained dedicated in the promotion of professional development among its members, with programs and activities geared to enhance your individual and collective capabilities to derive optimum customer satisfaction and be at par with global standards. And its noteworthy role in the passage of the Philippine Interior Design Act of 1998 is a clear proof of its determination to uphold the welfare of each member, and promote growth and development of the trade as well.

As you mark 43 years of PIID's meaningful existence, may you be inspired by your outstanding achievements – individually and as a group – that have brought pride to our country and our people. I wish you all the best as you prepare to take on more challenges in your continuing mission of creating beautiful and innovative designs for your valued clients.

Congratulations, and more power!

ARLEN P. DE GUZMAN
PIID President

Celebrating the 43rd year of PIID's existence is not just another milestone, but one that will spell a difference! I say this, for PIID has not been sleeping on its Task to Police and Protect the Profession and its legitimate Interior Designers from "Pseudo - Designers".

The recently launched advocacy campaign was actually meant for public awareness on the existing rules and regulations with appropriate sanctions established in R.A 8534. Thru the years, we have been gathering facts and now, the time has come when the proliferation of Illegal Practitioners can no longer be ignored. Many instances they have tinge the image of the profession through unethical deals and poor design delivery.

The choice of the anniversary theme - *A Paradigm of Sense and Style* is an indication of the Interior Designers' real grasp of the thrust towards a meaningful direction to suit the lifestyle and environmental demands of the times and the community.

With PIID's program of strict compliance with the Law - proper training and expertise gained thru exposure locally and globally, and affiliations with Allied and International Design Organizations - APSDA and IFI - easily we can achieve and be assured to realize the theme set forth. Indeed, the PIID have matured in these 43 years - and we look forward to the GOLDEN years ahead!

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House body ends hearings on cheap medicine

by Christian V. Esguerra

THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRADE HAS concluded its two-week public hearings on strategies to be adopted to bring down the price of medicines in the Philippines, said to be the second highest in Asia.

The House is said to be fast-tracking the "Cheaper Medicines Act," a priority administration legislation to meet a promise of Speaker Jose de Venecia to pass the measure by the end of the year.

"This is one way of neutralizing the effects of the NBN [the national broadband network scandal]," said Rep. Arthur Pinggoy, chair of the committee on health and author of one of 23 bills for cheaper medicines.

Contentious issues

"It's also a way of improving the image of the lower House since it has no output so far," Pinggoy said.

The job of consolidating the 23 bills into a compromise measure lies in the hands of the technical working group under the supervision of Rizal Rep. Michael John Duavit.

Pinggoy said the group is set to complete its work by Sunday and submit the proposal to the trade committee on Monday.

Iloilo Rep. Ferjenel Biron said the two most contentious issues were the proposed amendment to the Intellectual Property Code, and the establishment of a drug price regulation regime. These same issues helped kill a cheaper medicines bill introduced in the previous Congress.

The first strategy would allow the parallel importation of drugs being sold at much lower prices outside the Philippines. The second one proposes a ceiling on the prices of medicines sold in the country.

The idea of parallel importation was the version authored by Sen. Manuel Roxas III and subsequently passed by the Senate in the 13th Congress.

Key feature

Drug price regulation is a key feature in Biron's House Bill No. 1, a proposal which faced vehement objections from several congressmen supportive of the Roxas bill.

Pinggoy said the argument against drug price regulation, claiming it would go against the current of globalization and liberalization.

Biron yesterday said amending the Patents Law would have no effect on the prices of medicines. He said it would cover only patented drugs, which comprise less than 10 percent of the market.

As a compromise, he said he has agreed to limit the implementation of drug price regulation to two years. He also proposed that the measure be revisited before the end of the 14th Congress in 2010.

Biron also suggested that this measure be "formulation or therapeutic selective," meaning it would cover only specific drugs for chronic illnesses. Among these were maintenance drugs for cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases.

"If they'll pass only the amendments to the Patents Law, people will only get frustrated because it will never lower the prices of medicines," he said.

"But if this is the case, we might as well not pass a cheaper medicines bill. We don't want a watered-down version. Let's not give our people false hopes," he said.

JDV: No breach of ethics in case of son's business

By Norman Bordadora

SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA, FACING AN ethics case in the House, said yesterday his son had no stake in Multi-Media Telephony, Inc., when Congress gave the company a franchise for radio paging in 1995.

De Venecia issued a statement in response to a complaint filed with the ethics committee earlier this week by Lawyer Ruel Pulido citing a possible conflict of interest when Congress granted De Venecia's son a telecommunications franchise during his incumbency as Speaker of the House.

Not a shareholder

"At the time the franchise was approved, he was not a shareholder or officer at all, nor did he have any interest in the company. Only much later was he employed as Chief Operating Officer by Multi-Media Telephony Inc.," De Venecia said.

His statement, however, did not address Pulido's allegation that in 1997, when De Venecia was also still Speaker, Congress extended MTI's franchise to include broadband services.

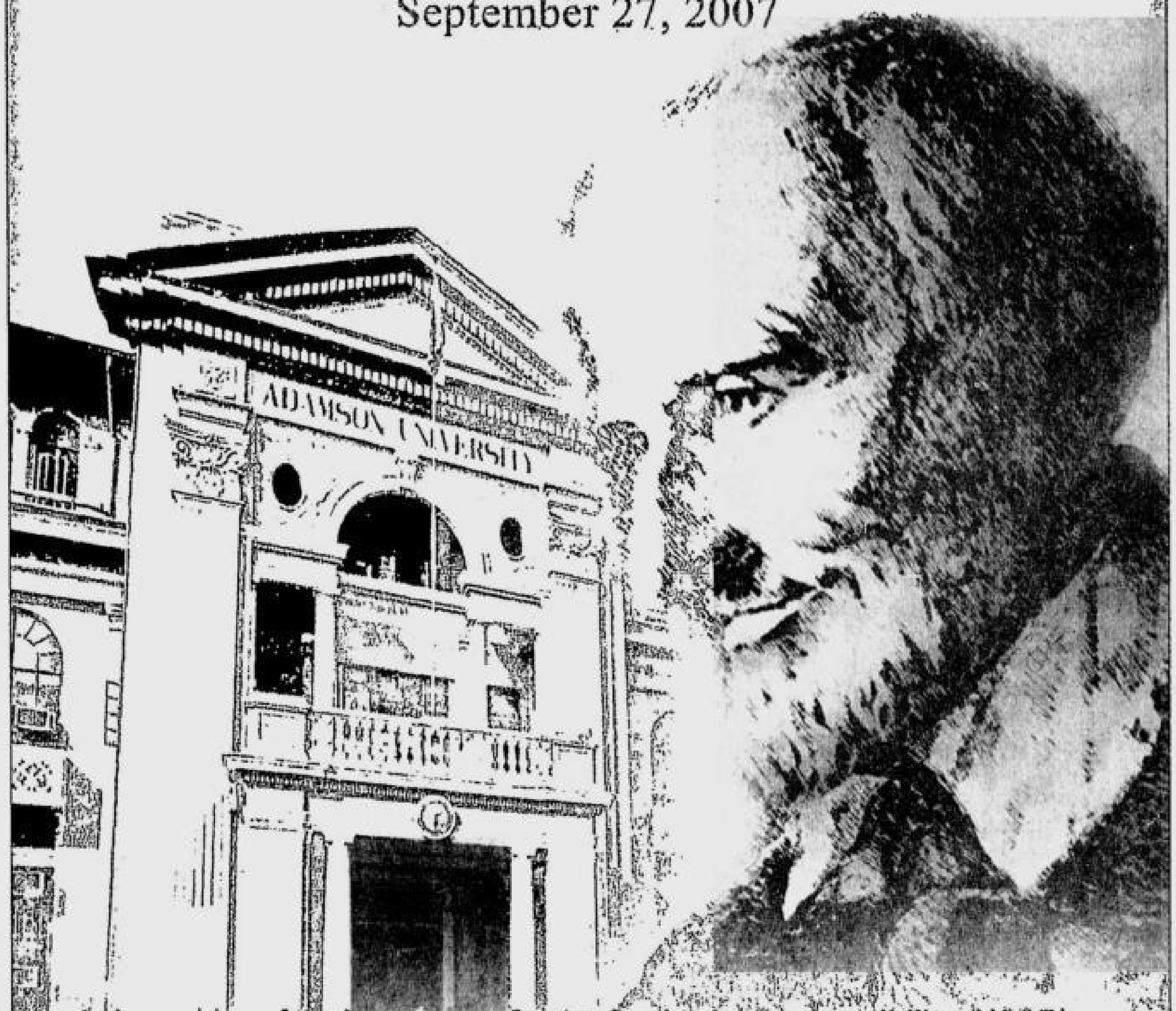
Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte, whose Kampi party had challenged but lost the speakership to De Venecia at the start of the 14th Congress, had said in a privilege speech on Tuesday that the ethics case may lead to De Venecia's ouster as leader of the House.

'Independent of his father'

De Venecia's son caused a stir when he told a Senate inquiry that he had been offered a bribe to withdraw his company's bid for a China-funded national broadband deal, and that the husband of the President had personally told him to "back off."

De Venecia said that the 1987 Constitution and pertinent laws on conflict of interest cover only personal interests of legislators, their wives, and emancipated children. It excludes the interests of other relatives such as brothers, sisters, parents and a child of age.

"Very clearly, Jose de Venecia III is of age and independent of his father," the statement said, concluding that his son's participation in corporations holding legislative franchises could not be considered a violation of the Constitution and the provision of the Anti-Graft Law."



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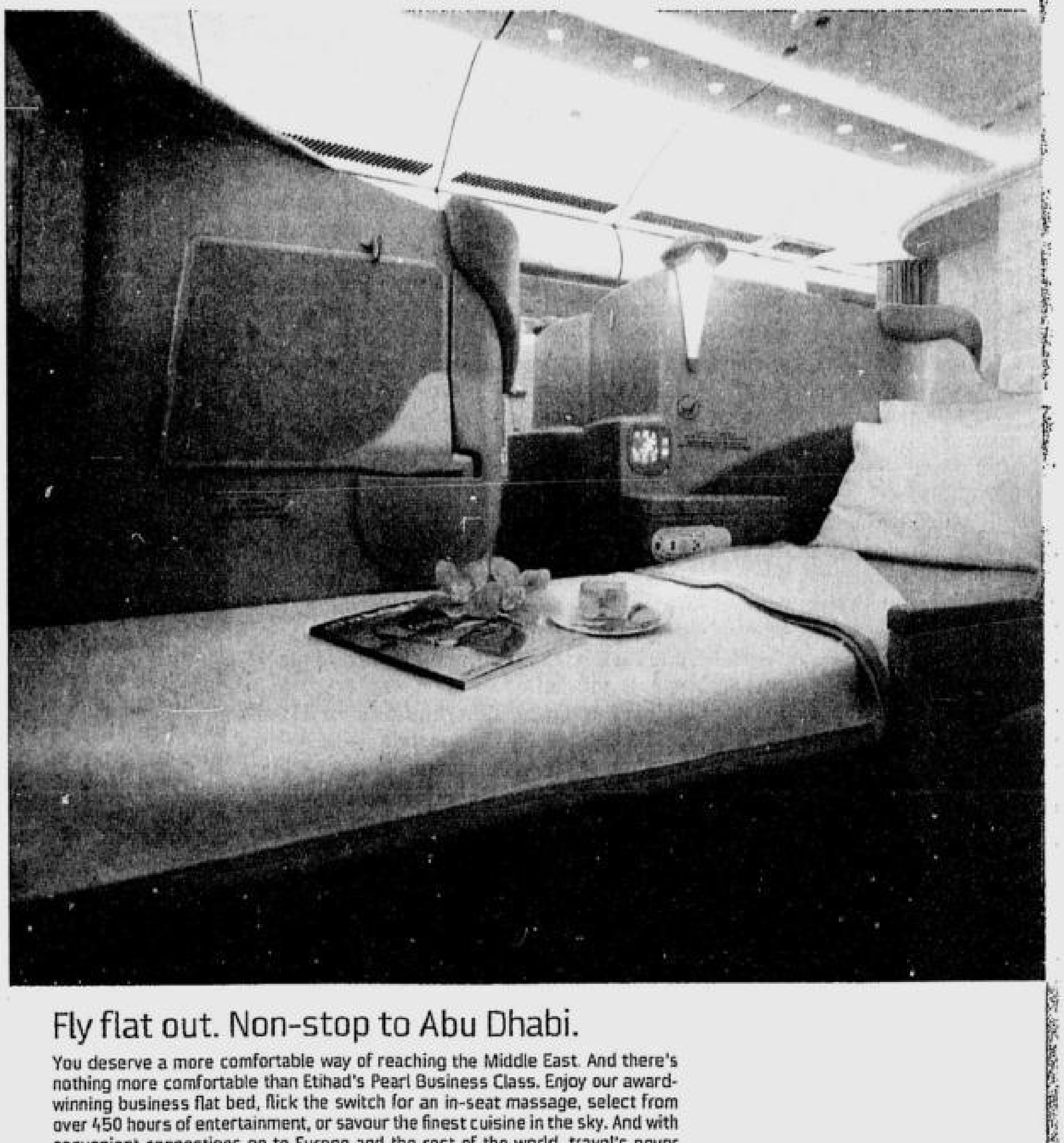

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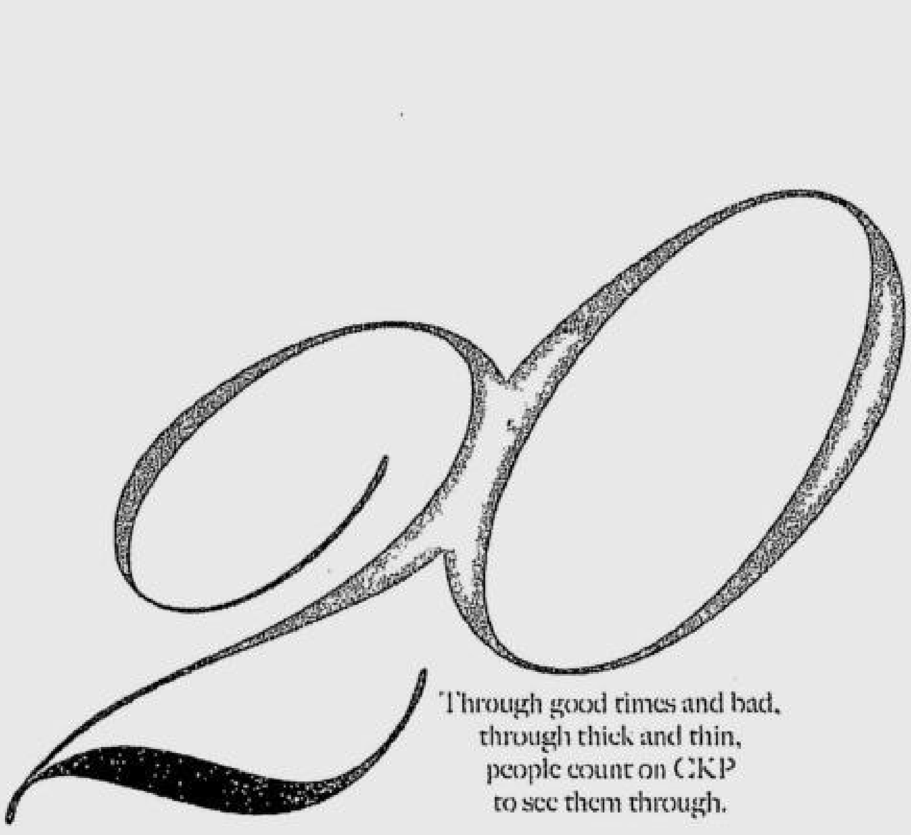

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Mercury is RISING & Mother Earth is SICK

I rise on an issue that envelopes the earth, an issue that occupied the attention of generations of scientists but is just now arising in public consciousness.

In the last 30 years, world's average temperature has risen dramatically. Mercury is rising and Mother Earth is feverish. The number one culprit is greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels to feed our industries and run our motor vehicles.

This rise in world's temperature is causing dramatic climate change. The rise in the world's sea level, abnormal weather patterns, strong typhoons, tornadoes, el niño and la niña phenomena, heavy rains which cause flooding in many parts of the world, and loss of biodiversity are just some of the effects of climate change.

Rapid global warming and climate change are issues that affect our country being an archipelago in the biggest ocean of our earth – an ocean considered as the main driver of the world's climate systems.

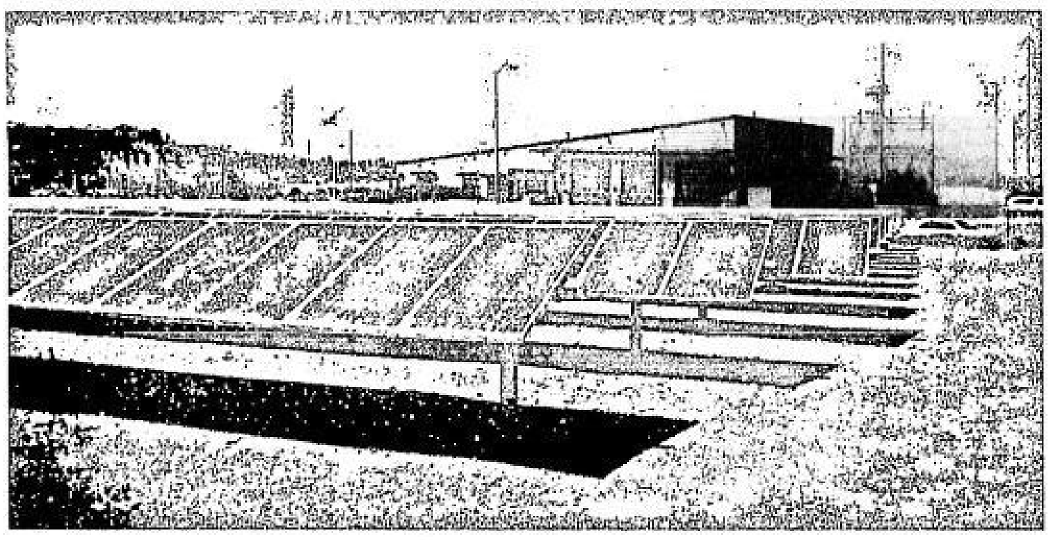
The early warning signs are: heat waves and period of unusually warm weather; ocean warming, sea-level rise and coastal flooding; glaciers melting; and Arctic and Antarctic warming. The harbingers are: spreading disease; early spring arrival; plant and animal range shifts and population changes; corral reef bleaching; intense downpours, heavy snowfalls and heavy flooding; droughts and fires.

Early warning signs are measurable events but are not so easily perceived as signs while harbingers manifest the chain of events over time and say definitively that what is being warned has come about.

Sen. Juan Miguel 'Migz' Zubiri

Excerpts from the Privilege Speech delivered August 7, 2007

We must think global ...but act local. Promote renewable energy for a cleaner world!



They are vital signs and symptoms – of a very sick earth - that scientists record and for which governments spend billions of dollars to diagnose, and of late, to heal. Let me repeat, Mother Earth is sick.

Long ago, anyone of us could have said "what of an ice cap melting that's so far away". Besides, the earth underwent cataclysmic climatic changes and it has bounced back and managed to host new species. When drastic climate change wiped out the dinosaurs, mammals and man flourished.

The debate rages on. One camp says global warming fits a normal pattern of the earth's climate since it was born and that we are merely in one of those cycles of climatic changes. The other camp says the warming is coming in convulsions and man holds most of the blame, especially since the Industrial Revolution.

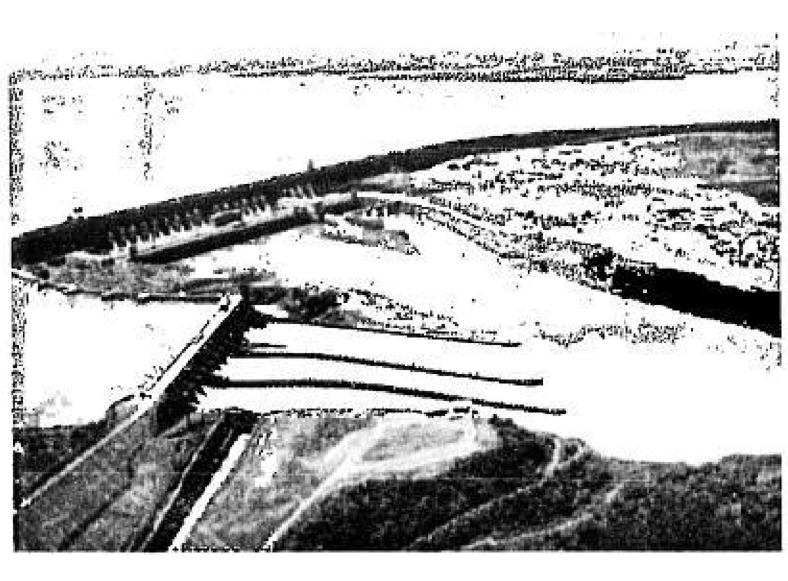
What is it really? Climate change "refers to the variation in the earth's global climate or in regional climates over time. It describes changes in the variability or average state of the atmosphere over time scales ranging from decades to millions of years. These changes can be caused by processes internal to the Earth, external forces such as, variations in sunlight intensity or, more recently, human activities."

Climate scientists at Goddard Institute for Space Studies also corrected previously accepted conclusions that most global warming occurred before 1940. It said: "Global warming is now 0.6°C in the past three decades and 0.8°C in the past century. It is no longer correct to say that 'most global warming occurred before 1940'. More specifically, there was slow global warming, with large fluctuations, over the century up to 1975 and subsequent rapid warming of almost 0.2°C per decade."

It is ordinarily believed that melted ice will cool ocean water and just raise sea levels. It would. But a further life-threatening result of melting polar ice caps is that the extremely cold water sinks and pushes warmer air on the sea surface upwards. This in combination with altered ocean currents greatly produce extreme weather situations like stronger cyclones and heavy precipitation in altered patterns of type, frequency, density and coverage.

Tornados that hit Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Bulacan and the hale in Baguio are among them. The devastation of supertyphoons that hit Bicol hard demolished houses, destroyed crops and infrastructure, are similarly effects of global warming. The excessive downpour which produced landslides in Leyte and buried people and properties is another.

Heavy and persistent rainfall caused similar landslides in Compostela Valley and Bukidnon while on mainland Luzon , Albay cries out for water. Global warming causes a redistribution of rainfall: lots of it in one area and lacking in another.



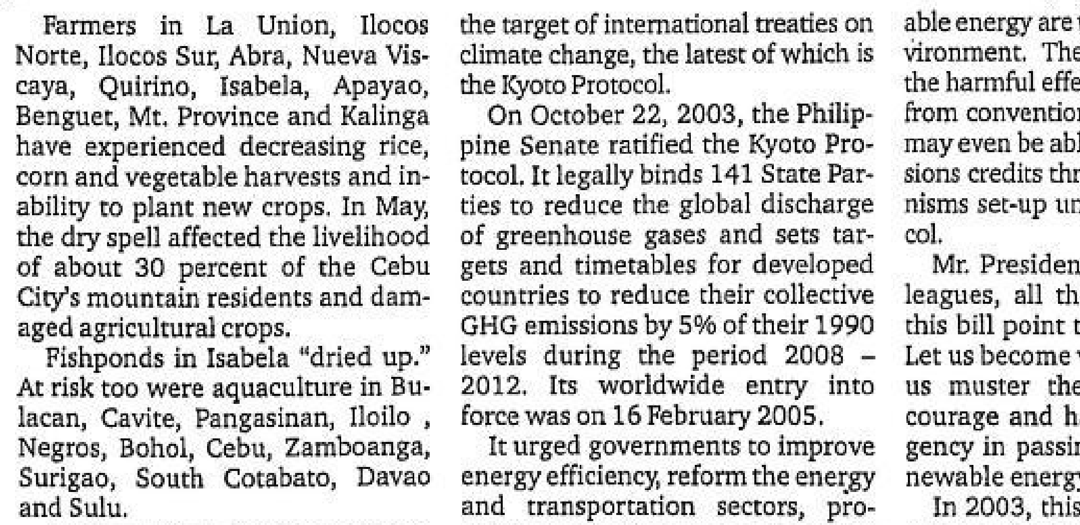
How we produce and use power, farm, manufacture goods, consume our goods - and consume wastefully -had caused the thickening of the layer of Green House Gases (GHG) in the atmosphere, of which carbon dioxide is the most prevalent.

Our country's GHG emissions come from activities associated with energy - accounting for almost 50 per cent of our GHG emissions, for power and fuel; agriculture at 33 %, industry at 11 % and waste at 7 %.

The Green House Gases - Hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulphur hexafluoride, carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide trap infrared waves that should have been radiated back into space. The GHG reabsorb these infrared waves, then re-emit these downward thereby causing lower temperatures to warm.

We have not been good stewards, thus our sufferings. More than that, at greater risk are those who work the soil like farmers in the vegetable bowl in the Cordilleras to the farmers in rice bowl of central Luzon. Those who harvest resources from lakes, rivers and seas. Those who eke out a living as marginal fishers from the coastal areas, or even operators of the most luxurious beach resorts. Livestock growers in the piggeries lately struck by cholera.

It is ironic that we, who control the resources to combat global warming are one of the last to know. More ironic, is that global warming impacts most negatively to people who are already poor.



Farmers in La Union, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Abra, Nueva Viscaya, Quirino, Isabela, Apayao, Benguet, Mt. Province and Kalinga have experienced decreasing rice, corn and vegetable harvests and inability to plant new crops. In May, the dry spell affected the livelihood of about 30 percent of the Cebu City's mountain residents and damaged agricultural crops.

Fishponds in Isabela "dried up." At risk too were aquaculture in Bulacan, Cavite, Pangasinan, Iloilo , Negros, Bohol, Cebu, Zamboanga, Surigao, South Cotabato, Davao and Sulu.

Another effect of climate change is increase in the ranges of disease vectors.

Doctors undertook a study that concentrated on seven landfall tropical cyclones and the relation to hospital admission of eight diseases (gastroenteritis, dengue fever, hepatitis, influenza, measles, typhoid fever, bronchopneumonia, and tetanus) for the period 1984 to 1988. They found that admissions on mosquito-borne diseases and water-borne diseases had increased due to global warming.

As a result of the lack of rainfall during the second quarter "the energy sector has increased the use of coal and oil to compensate for the limited load from hydroelectric plants. National Power Corp. said that 18.95 percent on the average of the generation mix from 2001 to 2006 came from the hydro plants, peaking last year at 23 percent. The generation mix is derived from coal, geothermal, hydro, natural gas and oil-based plants. With the decrease in the capacity of hydroelectric plants to produce power, the slack is now being taken up by coal, oil, natural gas and geothermal energy-fed power plants."

Hydroelectric plants of San Roque, Binga and Magat in Northern Luzon and Angat and Pantabangan in Central Luzon had low water levels."

Because our alternative energy resources are not yet fully tapped, this development in the energy sector alone could set us back with so many tons of carbon dioxide emissions, one of the largest greenhouse gases and the target of international treaties on climate change, the latest of which is the Kyoto Protocol.

On October 22, 2003, the Philippine Senate ratified the Kyoto Protocol. It legally binds 141 State Parties to reduce the global discharge of greenhouse gases and sets targets and timetables for developed countries to reduce their collective GHG emissions by 5% of their 1990 levels during the period 2008 – 2012. Its worldwide entry into force was on 16 February 2005.

It urged governments to improve energy efficiency, reform the energy and transportation sectors, promote renewable energy, phase out inappropriate fiscal measures and market imperfections, limit methane emissions from waste management and energy systems, and protect forests and other carbon "sinks".

What had the Philippines done since then? We have to think global and act local. We want to save the world but we must act locally. We have done part of our share. We have passed RA 9367 or the Biofuels law last year. And, I would like to thank Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, as my counterpart in the Senate, when we championed the law in the 13th Congress.

With that law, instead of importing our oil, we can now plant 'oil' in our soil. Thus, saving the country of dollar reserves from importing fuel oils while providing our farmers alternative crops to plant and increase agricultural productivity. The use of biofuels will also reduce CO2 emissions and increase efficiency of our motor vehicles. However, that is not enough.

We are renewing our call, sounding off the alarm and raising the ante, that the Senate act fast in passing the Renewal Energy Bill which several of our colleagues have filed, as well as this representation.

This bill will ignite the development and utilization of renewable energy in the country. This will redound to a net-benefit of as much as $1.2 billion through the development of about 2,500 MW of renewable energy-based on on-grid power projects. The country will also substantially reduce its dependence and avoid high import costs of crude oil or fuels typically used by conventional power plants. But more important than the economic benefits of using renewable energy are the benefits to the environment. The country will avoid the harmful effects of GHG emissions from conventional power plants. We may even be able to sell carbon emissions credits through trading mechanisms set-up under the Kyoto Protocol.

Mr. President, distinguished colleagues, all the effects of passing this bill point to positive direction. Let us become visionary leaders, let us muster the political will and courage and have the sense of urgency in passing legislation for renewable energy.

In 2003, this Senate had demonstrated its political will and vision for our future when it ratified the Kyoto Protocol and passed the Biofuels law.

Mother Earth is seriously ill and needs intensive care. We must do our share to stop the world from hemorrhaging. It is now our time to rise again and secure our future, our children's future and the future of the generations to come.

Paid for by the Renewable Energy Coalition

2 soldiers slain in fierce Basilan clash

By Nikko Dizon

TWO ARMY SOLDIERS WERE KILLED AND 10 wounded in an early morning clash yesterday with the Islamic extremist Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Tipo-tipo, Basilan.

A US helicopter from American forces based in Zamboanga City backed up two Philippine Air Force UH-1H choppers in evacuating the military casualties, said Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr.

The identities of the two dead soldiers—one from the Army's Scout Rangers and the other a member of the 9th special forces company—were witheld pending notification of their families. Two of those wounded were airmen of the Clark-based Philippine Air Force special operations wing. A paramilitary volunteer and a civilian were also among those injured.

Citing initial reports, Esperon said government troops encountered 50 to 80 ASG bandits in Silankum village in Unkaya Pukan, Basilan.

"It was a fierce encounter...there was heavy volume of fire in the morning that continued in the afternoon," Esperon said.

The rebels were reportedly led by Furuji Indama, who was reported killed in an Aug. 18 clash, also in Unkaya Pukan.

Esperon said they would "validate" the earlier reports of Indama's death.

The clash broke a month-long lull in the fighting between the ASG and government soldiers, who launched intensive pursuit operations after a clash last July 10 saw 14 Marines killed, 10 of them beheaded. *With a report by Tarra Quismundo*

Wife to press kidnap raps vs MJ

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE KIDNAPPING AND PROTECTION ORDER cases filed against Mark Jimenez by his estranged wife will proceed even with Jimenez's sudden change of heart and offer of forgiveness.

The lawyer of Caroline Castañeda yesterday said Jimenez's decision to withdraw the estafa cases he filed against Castañeda and her children would have no bearing on the case.

Her client would pursue the kidnapping case against Jimenez, she said.

"It doesn't matter if Mr. Jimenez decides to forgive Carol and the children, or not. All the cases against him will continue," said lawyer Evalyn Ursua.

Jimenez on Tuesday announced that he was withdrawing the extortion case he filed against former justice secretary Hernando Perez, as well as the estafa cases against Castañeda and three of his children for allegedly selling his shares in a telecommunications firm and some pieces of real estate without his knowledge.

Very relevant

The former congressman also said he had decided to unconditionally withdraw the abuse of discretion suit he filed against Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

Ursua said the issues in the kidnapping case against Jimenez were still "very much relevant."

"We want the legal system to settle and rule on the cases," Ursua said in a phone interview.

Carol filed kidnapping charges against Jimenez last May after her rescue from Silvercrest Foundation, a drug rehabilitation facility in Las Piñas.

She claimed that she was forcibly brought to the facility despite a temporary protection order issued by a Taguig court, barring Jimenez from going near her.

Carol also claimed having been the victim of physical and mental abuse by Jimenez, who denied the accusations and said his wife was a drug dependent who needed to be treated.

Ursua pointed out that in order for Jimenez to be actually able to bestow "forgiveness" on his wife and children, the rule of law must apply and justice served.

No reconciliation

"There must be justice first before forgiveness. Even if he withdraws the cases he filed," she said.

The lawyer added that reconciliation between the estranged couple was out of the question "a long time ago."

"In fact, it should be Jimenez who should be asking for Carol's pardon, not Carol asking for Jimenez to forgive her. It was Jimenez who was in the wrong," Ursua said.

Meanwhile, Ursua said she would file a motion for reconsideration to retain Taguig Regional Trial Court judge Leili Cruz-Suarez in the case. Suarez inhibited herself from the protection order case recently.

Judge Lorifel Acap-Pahinma of Branch 69 also inhibited herself from the case last June after Jimenez's lawyers filed a motion seeking Pahinma's exclusion.

"It's the same move again. We think there is no ground for the other camp to ask the new judge to inhibit herself. It's a delaying tactic," Ursua said.

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Kuwait court upholds death sentence on Pinay

KUWAIT CITY—THE KUWAIT appeals court on Wednesday upheld a death sentence against a Filipino housemaid for killing her employer's seven-year-old son by slitting his throat, a legal source said.

May Membrini, as the name was shown in court documents, was convicted of killing the boy last January, as well as slitting his 11-year-old brother's throat and stabbing his 17-year-old sister.

Quarrel

Afterwards she allegedly jumped from the second storey of her employer's home.

A police source said at the time that Membrini—who had been in Kuwait for six months—had quarrelled with her employers.

Not final

The new ruling is not final as it must be challenged before the court of cassation, the emirate's highest court.

Death sentences in the Gulf state are carried out by hanging and must be signed by the emir to be implemented.

Some 73,000 Filipinos, including 60,000 women employed mostly as housemaids, work in oil-rich Kuwait.

Another Filipina faces a death sentence in Kuwait after she was convicted of murdering her female Kuwaiti employer. *AFP*

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Kapatiran picks new officers

RENATO H. PERonilla, a retired bank executive, is the new president of Ang Kapatiran Party succeeding lawyer Mario E. Ongkiko, the party announced yesterday.

Founded by Reynaldo "Nandy" Pacheco, AKP is a national political party grounded on universal moral principles in pursuit of the common good. It promotes the politics of virtue, duty, stewardship, transparency and accountability.

The other officers elected were Manolo K. Dayrit, chair; David S. Lim, vice chair; Benjamin P. de Guzman, vice president; Eric B. Manalang, secretary general; Amador F. Astudillo and Rafael Q. Enriquez, deputy secretary generals, and Ricardo G. Librea, treasurer. Pacheco remains the founder and chair emeritus.

"The participation of Ang Kapatiran for the first time in the 2007 elections symbolized the beginning of a political renewal," the party said in a statement.

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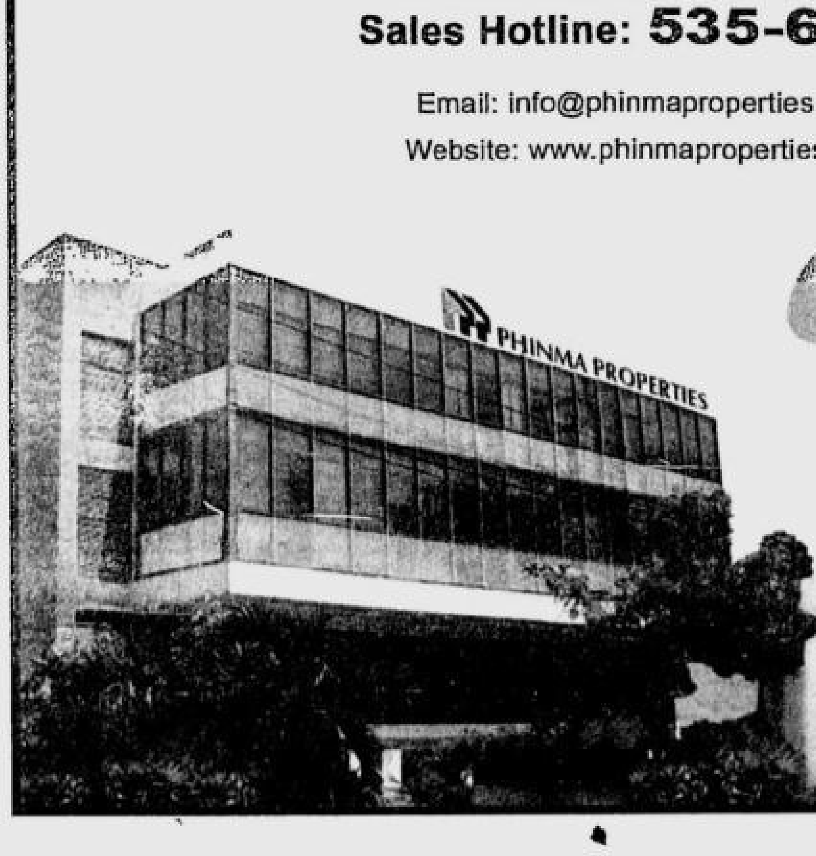

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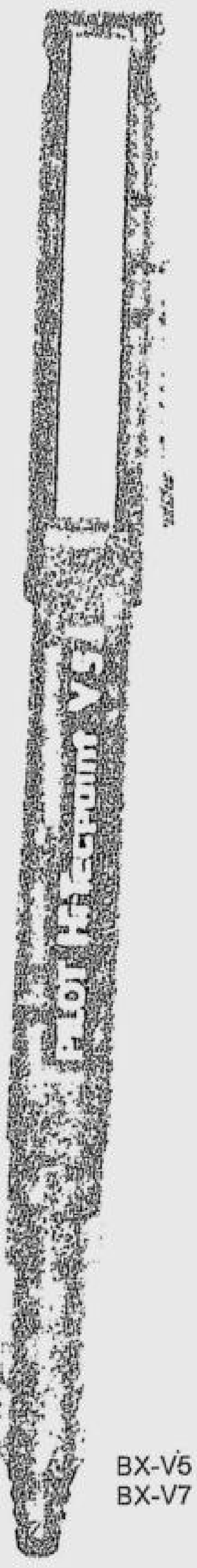

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Length and breadth of broadband deal

By PDI Research

JULY 12, 2006—THE DEpartment of Trade and Industry executes a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Zhong Xing Telecommunications Equipment (ZTE) International Investment Ltd. to cooperate in the development and implementation of various investment activities in the Philippines, including the National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

- **JULY 13**—President Macapagal-Arroyo announces at the Clark Special Economic Zone the creation of a cyber corridor covering the cities of Baguio, Cebu, Davao and Manila and Clark. The corridor will host call centers and outsourcing companies and will be supported through additional digital infrastructure.
- **AUG. 1**—Ms Arroyo names Ramon Sales, head of the government's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as "focal person" or coordinator for the Cyber Corridor.
- **AUG. 7**—ZTE Corp. submits to the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT), an attached agency of the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), a proposal for the NBN Project.

SEPT. 4 and 6—ZTE writes to CICT regarding clarification on the project proposal and incorporating the suggestions of CICT.

SEPT. 8—China Eximbank, through its general manager, Li Xiaoping, writes Neda informing that they are ready to exchange opinions and explore cooperation opportunities after China Eximbank and ZTE held discussions resulting in the conclusion that they may be available for transaction on the NBN project.

- **OCT. 23**—CICT endorses ZTE's proposal to the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) for further evaluation and action.

NOV. 21—Secretary Michael Defensor wrote to Minister Bo Xilai of the Ministry of Commerce, People's Republic of China, to verify and confirm the interest of Chinese companies in arranging a comprehensive solution, to include financial and technical support, for the development and implementation of the NBN and Distant Learning projects of the Philippine government.

- **DEC. 2**—Chinese Ambassador Li Jin Jun informs Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor through a letter that the Chinese government intends to support the NBN project and that China has designated ZTE as the contractor.
- **JAN. 2, 2007**—The DOTC receives a letter from Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI) dated Dec. 5, 2006 informing the DOTC of its project, Orion Network, and requesting a favorable endorsement to Neda. Also mentioned in the letter is a request for the government to designate the DOTC as the project's coordinating agency.

JAN. 3—Neda requested the BOTC with TelOf (still under CICT) to take the lead in the preparation and implementation of Cyber Corridor projects taking into consideration the requirements of concerned end-user agencies. Neda also requested for the submission of the necessary Neda-ICC documents to facilitate processing of the project particularly the IP-based National Broadband Network Project

FEB. 13—Executive Order No. 603 was issued by the President transferring the TelOf and all other operating units directly supporting communications from the CICT to the direct control and supervision of the DOTC.

- **FEB. 14**—Neda refers to the DOTC for assistance and recommendation on the possible reconciliation of three similar proposals: 1) the Cyber Education Project (CEP) of the Department of Education (DepEd), 2) the NBN project endorsed by CICT (ZTE project proposal) and 3) the build-own-operate (BOO) NBN project of AHI.

FEB. 19—DOTC/TelOf officials and personnel attended the meeting at Neda Board Room to discuss the technical details and concerns on the NBN project.

FEB. 26—ZTE submitted to DOTC copy of their NBN proposal which they have submitted to CICT and was subsequently endorsed by CICT to Neda.

FEB. 27—DOTC received another letter from Neda dated Feb. 20, 2007 requesting for the submission/endorsement of a reconciled project proposal in view of the Feb. 13, 2007 joint Neda-ICC and Cabinet meeting wherein the DOTC was instructed to sort out possible overlaps on the Cyber Education project of the DepEd and IP Based National Broadband Network Project of the DOTC/TelOf.

- **MARCH 1**—DOTC/CICT submits to Neda the evaluation made on the three project proposals and recommends the implementation of a single government IP platform.
- **MARCH 1-20**—ZTE submits to the DOTC a revised NBN proposal with technical solution, project feasibility report, price summary, etc.

MARCH 23—The DOTC endorses to Neda the revised NBN proposal of ZTE.

- **MARCH 26**—The NBN project is presented to the joint ICC Cabinet Committee and ICC Technical Board meeting for deliberation and approval.
- **MARCH 26**—Ambassador Li Jin Jun writes a letter to Ms Arroyo, conveying that the Chinese government will fully support the NBN project of ZTE and the Distance Learning project of the DepEd.
- **MARCH 26**—AHI offered to build the NBN for the government for $242 million, questions the DOTC's alleged bias for ZTE that offered to build the same facility under a $262-million government-to-government loan agreement. (Reported March 27, 2007).
- **MARCH 29**—The Neda board approves the implementation of the NBN project.

MARCH 30—ICT technical working group recommends the direct contracting mode in the procurement for the supply of equipment and services for the NBN project.

- **MARCH 31**—DOTC officials award the contract to ZTE, saying that AHI's unsolicited proposal lacked complete documentation necessary for it to be considered.

APRIL 10—BAC for ICT, considering RA 9184 and the recommendation of the TWG-ICT, have resolved to recommend that the procurement for the supply of equipment and services for the NBN project will be undertaken thru direct contracting and to refer the matter to the GPPB and Neda for approval.

APRIL 16—DOTC writes to GPPB and Neda requesting for opinion and approval of the procurement process for the implementation of the NBN project, respectively.

APRIL 16—TWG submits evaluation report and recommendation on the technical aspect of the draft as input for DOTC Legal Office's final review.

APRIL 20—Secretary Romulo Neri of Neda writes to Minister Bo Xilai of Ministry of Commerce and Chairman/President Li Rougu of China Eximbank endorsing the NBN project for loan financing of the People's Republic of China under the Preferential Buyer's Credit Facility of China Eximbank.

- **APRIL 21**—Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza and ZTE vice president Yu Yong sign the $329-million NBN contract in Boao, China, in ceremonies witnessed by Ms Arroyo.

APRIL 24—The GPPB advises DOTC that an opinion from the DOJ may prove relevant in the DOTC's final determination on whether the NBN contract is entered into pursuant to Section 4 of RA 9184 mandating observance of executive agreements or Section 50 of RA 9184 on Direct Contracting.

MAY 28—DOTC requests the Department of Finance to facilitate the availment of a soft loan from the China Eximbank.

MAY 31—DOTC requests for opinion from the DOJ on the following issues: 1) whether or not the proposed NBN project can be considered an executive agreement by virtue of MOU signed between GRP (DTI through Secretary Peter J. Favila) and ZTE and subsequent "exchange of notes" between representatives of GRP and GOC and 2) granting the NBN project is deemed to be an "executive agreement," would the mode of procurement fall under EO No. 423, s.2005, on alternative mode of procurement (direct contracting) or under the last sentence of Section 4 of RA 9184.

- **JUNE 20**—Communications Assistant Secretary Lorenzo G. Formoso III discloses at a business forum the loss of the two "sovereign" contract documents—one for ZTE and the other for the CEP.

JUNE 21—The DOJ requests for clear and legible copies of the following documents: 1) letter of Ambassador of China Li Jinjun to Presidential Chief of Staff Michael T. Defensor dated Dec. 2, 2006; 2) contract for the Supply of Equipment and Services for the National Broadband Network Project between the DOTC and ZTE Corp. and 3) the Loan Agreement with the China Eximbank.

- **JUNE 26**—The Senate calls for an investigation of the broadband contract, saying that ZTE has been involved in "questionable deals" in other countries.
- **JUNE 27**—Mendoza says the NBN contract with ZTE is still subject to review by the Department of Justice and the Department of Finance.

JULY 11—DOTC submits to the DOJ the requested copies of 1) letter of Ambassador of China Li Jinjun to Presidential Chief of Staff Michael T. Defensor dated Dec. 2, 2206 and 2) the reconstituted NBN contract.

- **JULY 26**—Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez issues an opinion that says that the contract is an executive agreement and does not need to go through a public bidding.
- **AUGUST**—Iloilo Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico asks the Supreme Court to nullify the ZTE contract for being unconstitutional and to stop its implementation.
- **AUG. 6**—The President's legal adviser, Sergio Apostol, says the project cannot be implemented because the contract is nonexistent, having been stolen in China shortly after the signing.
- **AUG. 7**—Trade Secretary Peter Favila says the supposed ZTE contract is just a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or Memorandum of agreement (MOA) and not a supply contract.
- **AUG. 9**—DOTC confirms it has signed a reconstituted supply contract with ZTE.
- **AUG. 25**—The Philippines and China sign a $1.8-billion loan agreement, allegedly including an amount for the NBN project.
- **AUG. 27**—Favila says $400 million of the $1.8 billion is not meant for any particular project like the NBN.
- **AUG. 28**—Rep. Carlos Padilla lodges a criminal complaint against Mendoza and two assistant secretaries of the DOTC at the Office of the Ombudsman for allegedly "giving undue advantage" to ZTE.
- **AUG. 29**—Padilla, citing a column by Jarius Bondoc in the Philippine Star, tags Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. as the poll official who allegedly lobbied for the ZTE broadband contract. Padilla says Abalos played golf with ZTE executives in Shenzhen and at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City just weeks before the contract was signed.
- **AUG. 30**—Abalos admits that he and some ZTE officials were golfing buddies and that ZTE executives paid for his trips to China. However, Abalos maintains that he never helped the company to win the deal. Abalos says he and ZTE officials met with Finance Secretary Margarito Teves at Teves' house in Alabang, Muntinlupa, "one afternoon last year," but adds that the NBN project was not discussed.
- **AUG. 31**—Teves confirms that he was introduced to ZTE officials at a meeting with Mendoza and Abalos and that they talked about the NBN project.
- **SEPT. 1**—Abalos says he called Teves and that the latter supposedly apologized for saying that Abalos was present when the project came during a discussion in Wack Wack.
- **SEPT. 5**—Romulo Neri, former Neda director general and now Commission on Higher Education head, neither confirms nor denies that he was offered P200 million to support the NBN project. (A Newsbreak report would later say that Abalos offered Romulo P200 million so that Neda would "help" with the ZTE deal.)
- **SEPT. 9**—Ms Arroyo talks with Chinese President Hu Jintao about the controversial NBN project on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in Sydney, suggesting that Favila and Chinese Commerce Minister Bo Xilai work together to resolve the issue.
- **SEPT. 10**—AHI asks the Supreme Court to compel Malacañang to give it a copy of the contract won by ZTE. AHI also seeks for a temporary restraining order on the implementation of the government's deal with ZTE while its petition is pending.
- —AHI cofounder Jose "Joey" de Venecia III says at a forum that the supply contract with ZTE is overpriced by about $130 million to cover "commissions." He describes Abalos as appearing to be the "captain" of those who were brokering the ZTE deal. De Venecia says Abalos offered him $10 million in December 2006 to back off from the project.
- —ZTE denies bribing government officials to bag the $329-million contract, saying that its initial offer of $262 million grew to $329 million because the government's requirements changed.
- **SEPT. 11**—Acting on the petitions of Suplico and AHI, the Supreme Court issues a temporary restraining order on the implementation of the NBN project.

—Sen. Panfilo Lacson calls the President the driving force behind the deal with ZTE as he came out with a "reconstituted" copy of the supply contract.

- **SEPT. 12**—Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile says the "reconstituted copy" Lacson presented was merely a supply agreement and that the more binding contract, the financial agreement, has not yet been approved.
- In a letter to the blue ribbon committee, Mendoza begs off from attending the Senate hearing on the NBN project, saying that the two pending cases in the Supreme Court seeking to block the ZTE deal prevent him from speaking out on the matter.
- **SEPT. 14**—De Venecia says in an affidavit dated Sept. 11 that he was wiretapped by Abalos to monitor his conversations with ZTE officials and that it was Abalos himself, in a fit of rage, who admitted the offense sometime in February. Abalos denies the wiretap allegation and says that his lawyer is preparing to file several libel charges against De Venecia.
- De Venecia says that a "mystery man" is part of the cast of characters behind the $329-million contract, but says he will reveal the person's identity only if asked at a proper legal forum.
- **SEPTEMBER**—De Venecia says he has received threats from powerful persons, including one that supposedly came from Mendoza's camp. Mendoza scoffs at this allegation, calling it a "fairy tale."
- **SEPT. 17**—The President's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, boards a plane for Hong Kong on the eve of the Senate hearing on the NBN deal.
- **SEPT. 18**—De Venecia admits to the blue ribbon committee that the "mystery man" is the President's husband.
- De Venecia says it was at the "reconciliation" meeting in mid-March at Wack Wack that Arroyo, whom De Venecia assumes was asked by Abalos to talk to him when Abalos failed to talk him out of the project, shoved a finger at him and told him to "back off."
- Other personalities present at the meeting other than himself, Arroyo, Mendoza and Abalos were Jimmy Paz (Abalos' chief of staff), Quirino de la Torre (Abalos' security staff), Ruben Reyes and Leo San Miguel.
- In his testimony, De Venecia quoted his father as saying that Ms Arroyo asked Abalos during a golf game in Shenzhen in October last year why ZTE could not just undertake the project the way AHI had proposed (at no cost to the government).

The First Couple and Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., during a 10-city visit in China, were invited by the ZTE president to play golf. Abalos was one of the guest players.

- **SEPT. 19**—Arroyo, through his lawyer, confirms that he met with De Venecia at Wack Wack, but says it was "a purely chance encounter" that did not include his barking at the businessman to "back off" from the NBN deal.
- Arroyo says that he merely "reminded" De Venecia that his being the Speaker's son made it inappropriate for him to get involved in government contracts. The President's husband denies that Abalos was at the meeting, saying that only he, De Venecia and Mendoza were present. De Venecia says Arroyo's version of the meeting was "totally false."
- **SEPT. 20**—Mendoza confirms at the second Senate hearing that the meeting took place and reiterates what Arroyo had declared through his lawyer that Arroyo did not raise his voice.
- Mendoza even describes Arroyo as "mild-mannered," while portraying De Venecia as someone who dogged him and went to see him in his office "several times" to follow up on his firm's unsolicited NBN proposal.
- After the hearing, Mendoza tells reporters that it was the Speaker, the younger De Venecia's father, who aggressively lobbied for his son's firm to bag the contract.
- Favila says he is open to modifying or even rescinding the NBN deal and says he will talk to his Chinese counterpart, Trade Minister Bo Xilai, to discuss other options to undertake the NBN project, including its "cancellation or abrogation."
- **SEPT. 22**—The President suspends the NBN project "indefinitely," but senators say they will continue the probe despite the suspension.
- **SEPT. 24**—Ms Arroyo allows Neri, who failed to attend the Sept. 20 hearing due to "intestinal flu," to attend the Senate probe. Earlier, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Neri was part of the President's official delegation to the United Nations General Assembly that is scheduled to leave for New York the next day, but Neri himself later told reporters that his trip had been canceled.
- **SEPT. 25**—The President discloses at a meeting in Malacañang that she had the NBN project "discreetly investigated" and found that the reports of bribery tainting the project were "uncorroborated."
- **SEPT. 26**—Neri admits at the Senate hearing that Abalos offered him P200 million in exchange for giving the approval on the NBN project. Neri says he mentioned the bribe offer to Ms Arroyo, who he says told him to decline it.
- De Venecia reiterates his earlier claim that Abalos offered him a $10-million bribe, which the Comelec chair vehemently denies. Abalos also denies brokering the NBN deal for ZTE.

Compiled by Eliza Victoria, PDI Research/Source: PDI Archives and other reports

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Corrections

IN THE SEPT. 19 ISSUE, a front-page story—"Brave kidney donor was afraid of needle"—misspelled the nickname of the driver and kidney donor of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. The driver, Felicito Gunay, is nicknamed "Muroy"—not "Muray."

* * *

IN THE SEPT. 20 ISSUE, a Metro story on Page A20—"Violent frats accept only neophytes who submit to hazing"—misstated that Jay Yacat is the director of the UP College of Psychology. Yacat is an assistant professor—not director—of the UP Department—not College—of Psychology.

* * *

IN THE SEPT. 21 ISSUE, the word "not" was inadvertently omitted in a sentence of the article —"SC denies Eala plea with finality"—on Page A6. The sentence should have read: "The Supreme Court noted that Eala . . . contended only that he had not flaunted the relationship."

* * *

IN THE SEPT. 23 ISSUE, a phrase in a front-page article—"School rises from the ashes of Pinatubo"—should have read: "pretty much like a phoenix"—not sphinx—"risen from the ashes."

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, an Entertainment article on Page G4—"Less than gentle journeys"—misspelled the first name of a French actress. The actress' name is Brigitte—not Bridget—Bardot.

* * *

IN THE SEPT. 24 ISSUE, a Metro story on Page A26—"'Tsikitings' to create mini forests in urban jungle"—misstated the name of an environmental organization. The organization's name is Mother Earth Philippines—not Mother Earth Foundation.

* * *

IN THE SEPT. 26 ISSUE, a front-page story—"Bishop 'Soc' kicked out Doble, Ong from safety of seminary"—misstated that the Jesus is Lord Movement is a Catholic lay group. It is a Christian lay group.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a story on Page A2—"Here's what pardon could do"—misstated that Mikhail Lee Maxino, lawyer of businessman Jaime Ponce de Leon, said that Ponce de Leon fled the country after his conviction. The only statement that Maxino told the INQUIRER was that he facilitated the filing of the application for pardon on behalf of Ponce de Leon.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Neri continues to enjoy GMA trust, says Ermita

By Michael Lim Ubac

COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDucation (CHEd) Secretary Romulo Neri's testimony at the Senate has not damaged the presidency and he continues to have President Macapagal-Arroyo's trust, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said yesterday.

He said Neri's statements before senators proved he was more of a technocrat than a politician.

"Well, yes," said Ermita when asked if Neri continued to enjoy presidential trust.

Presidential Management Staff head Cerge Remonde denied Neri was on the way out.

"He will continue to be an alter ego of the President as chairman of CHEd with a Cabinet rank," said Remonde.

Ermita said Neri succeeded in driving home the point that the approval by the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) of the National Broadband Network project only concerned the concept of such a project.

"He said he did not choose the project. 'I approved the concept because ... we need a broadband network.' To that extent, he was talking like a technical man and secretary general of Neda," said Ermita.

Cabinet support

Ermita also said: "I don't think you might say (Neri) has done anything wrong. He's just saying what he thinks happened."

"We just go by the truth. Whatever the testimon(y) of a Cabinet member, such as Secretary Neri, had given, and as they led to the truth, then of course (we support him) because he's a Cabinet member."

But Ermita said it was up to the country to assess Neri's credibility, particularly with regard to his claim that Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos had tried to bribe him.

"Let the final outcome come out whether he will be proven to be very credible about everything he said," Ermita said.

Abalos not scapegoat

As regards Abalos, Ermita said it was not for Malacañang to pass judgment on him. He said the Palace was not making Abalos a scapegoat for the ZTE fiasco, either.

SEEKERS OF TRUTH: Protesters encouraging Neri to tell all he knows about the NBN-ZTE project are pushed away by the police from the Senate grounds. AP

Mention of woman's name gets Abalos goat

WHAT GOT THE GOAT OF Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos more than the bribery charge against him was the mention of a woman's name.

The Senate hearing had already dragged into the afternoon when Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. asked Abalos if he knew a certain Evelyn Catherine Silagon.

Abalos immediately turned defensive, and before Pimentel could complete his question, denied that he had fathered a child by Silagon.

He went on to denounce the text messages that he said he received on Tuesday night alleging that he had a mistress and giving details such as addresses and bank accounts.

Abalos said his wife had been hurt by the rumors that, he said, were also unfair to Silagon.

He said Silagon was a member of the media who covered the Metro Manila Development Authority when he was its chair.

Pimentel did not ask about the details in the anonymous text messages. Instead, he asked Abalos if the latter had used Silagon as a business front.

Abalos denied this.

Pimentel went on to say that Abalos was a "very powerful person" during elections, and that his son, losing senatorial candidate Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III, had a pending electoral protest.

"When you broker a deal, that's what estafadors do," Pimentel said.

Abalos immediately took offense.

"If you feel alluded to, I'm very sorry for you," Pimentel said, adding that he was not directly referring to Abalos. *Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

What Neri did not say; invokes executive privilege

From page A1

President had said "don't accept, next topic" or "that's a nice project, but why are they doing that?'"

Neri replied: "Beyond what I said your honor I invoke the right of executive privilege."

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon cut in: "Are you invoking it for you as a member of the Cabinet or are you invoking it in behalf of the President?"

"I guess the law says it can be invoked in behalf of the President and I've been instructed to invoke it," said Neri who revealed that a written order was already being prepared.

Neri clarified later that it was Ermita who had instructed him to invoke executive privilege, and that it was left to his discretion whether to talk about the P200-million bribe.

At the Palace, Ermita said that while he had not issued a letter allowing Neri to clam up on supposed confidential matters, the President, through his office, would be "ready to give that."

Last night, after a closed-door meeting, the senators decided not to press the issue of executive privilege that Neri had invoked and agreed to let him go home after he committed to attend the next sessions.

"Secretary Neri left a lot of things unanswered especially when it came to the President and her reaction to the bribe (offer) of Chairman Abalos," said Sen. Francis Escudero.

A senator who requested anonymity said most of his colleagues noticed that Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya virtually shadowed Neri throughout yesterday's hearing supposedly to ensure that Neri would not say anything that would put Ms Arroyo in a bad light.

Neri first invoked executive privilege when Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan asked if the President followed up on the NBN deal with him after he reported to her the alleged bribe offer of Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos.

Pangilinan pointed out that only the President or the executive secretary could invoke executive privilege.

Under EO 464, executive privilege covers all "confidential or classified information" between the President and her public officials.

The information includes conversations and correspondence between the President and the public official; military, diplomatic and other national security matters; information between inter-government agencies prior to the conclusion of treaties and executive agreements; discussion in closed-door Cabinet meetings; and matters affecting national security and public order.

2 and 2 together

Later in the hearing, Sen. Loren Legarda asked Neri if "any higher government official dictated that the ZTE project be given priority."

Neri replied that his conversations with the President were covered by Section 2A of EO 464.

Taken aback, Legarda said she was not even referring to his conversations with Ms Arroyo.

"There is no higher public official than me than the President, your honor," Neri replied.

Legarda said Neri himself had "put two and two together" and immediately assumed that the question had alluded to Ms Arroyo.

When asked if he had even "discouraged" the President against pursuing the ZTE deal, Neri again invoked executive privilege.

Sen. Alan Cayetano, chair of the Senate blue ribbon committee, said the senators would let Neri's claim of executive privilege pass in the meantime so the inquiry could continue.

However, Cayetano said, the joint committees investigating the deal would eventually decide whether to compel Neri to answer questions if his reason for invoking executive privilege would be found invalid.

Pangilinan later said in a statement: "By invoking executive privilege, the administration officials are leaving more questions than answers to a public that is already exasperated with anomalous deals involving the government.

"Most certainly it cannot be invoked to conceal the commission of a crime or to hide irregularities."

'Legally correct'

Cayetano said Neri should elaborate on Ms Arroyo's role in approving the ZTE contract and whether she had ordered Cabinet members to fast-track the deal.

The senator asked Neri whether what he had to say was "embarrassing" to the President.

Sen. Anna Consuelo "Jamby" Madrigal also asked Neri whether his conversation with the President involved a "high crime."

During a break in the hearing, Neri denied that he was "protecting the President."

"I don't think so. I'm just trying to do what is legally correct," he told reporters.

Overprice

During the hearing, Neri said the members of the Neda secretariat that studied the deal did not know whether the ZTE proposal was overpriced because they had no benchmark to compare prices.

"So we are entering into this blindly?" Escudero said.

In reply, Neri said the Neda Investment Coordinating Committee "approved" the ZTE proposal as submitted by the Department of Transportation and Communications, based not on the financial terms and the pricing, but on the viability and estimated project rate of return.

He also said he had agreed to go along with the project because he hoped that the NBN infrastructure that would be set up could later be used by private users, and eventually bring down the "shockingly high" cost of broadband calls in the country.

Cayetano pointed out, however, that Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza, who signed the contract in April, had said the NBN infrastructure would be used only by government offices.

Neri said the Neda secretariat had "no way" to check whether the ZTE propdsal was overpriced.

"If I were President, I would have had it bidded out to address these overpricing issues. So the parties can put their money where their mouths are," he said.

Phone call

Ermita admitted phoning Neri, but said that he did so only during the lunch break at yesterday's hearing and that they did not talk about executive privilege.

."I talked with him while he was in the CR (comfort room)," Ermita said.

He said Neri, as a Cabinet member, fully knew the "elements as to when and how you can invoke executive privilege."

"But you must know the conditions under which it could be invoked," Ermita said.

He said the conditions would include "first seeking permission from the President, or the President ordering me [to issue permission]." *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Jerome Aning*

Militants: Not hero but heel

By Jerome Aning

ACCORDING TO LEADERS OF militant groups, Romulo Neri fell short of becoming a hero.

Partido ng Manggagawa chair Renato Magtubo said the labor force could have congratulated the man for "courageously stating that he was bribed by Chairman Benjamin Abalos."

"But unfortunately, cowardice overcame him as he invoked executive privilege in order to shield Gloria Arroyo from the heat of the broadband controversy," Magtubo said, adding:

"Instead of a hero, Secretary Neri became the heel ... by refusing to reveal Ms Arroyo's instructions" on the broadband deal after he reported to her the bribe offer."

Magtubo said it was clear that Ms Arroyo was "the godmother of the NBN deal" because she had "personally grac[ed] the signing of the ZTE contract in China."

"No amount of invocation of executive privilege can hide that public fact," he said.

He added that Neri's testimony might result in the buck stopping with Abalos, and that the latter might become "the scapegoat in this scandal despite the foul smell coming from Malacañang."

Ferdinand Gaite, president of the Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage), said that as a public servant, Neri was duty-bound to speak up against corruption and inform the public who should be held accountable even if it cost Ms Arroyo her presidency.

"If Neri would invoke executive privilege and evade spilling the beans, he too should be prosecuted for conspiracy and covering up corruption," Gaite said.

'The people know'

According to Gaite, the public is "already aware" that Abalos and DOTC officials were not the only ones involved in the scandal.

"Secretary Neri owes it to the people. The people already know; he has nothing to lose," Gaite said.

He said the alleged involvement of the President's husband in the deal was "an affirmation of the role" that Ms Arroyo supposedly played in the deal.

Man who 'threatened' Neri over port deal

From page A1

to face" with Razon at a party held at the Forbes Park residence of Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.'s mother-in-law.

"During that party, he accosted me, in effect telling me, 'You will allow Harbour Centre to operate over my dead body,'" Neri told Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., quoting Razon.

Pimentel earlier asked Neri if he had incurred the ire of businessmen in the arrastre business, and if Razon was among these businessmen.

But Neri denied receiving a text message supposedly sent to an aide of his and read aloud by Pimentel: "If your boss mentions my name, I will personally break every bone in his body."

He also denied being threatened against his appearance at the Senate hearing.

Harbour Centre, owned by Reghis Romero II of RII Builders, operates a port terminal at the former Smokey Mountain.

It has not been able to get a license to handle the much bigger 20-foot containers currently limited to ICTSI at the Manila International Container Terminal and Asian Terminal Inc. at the South Harbor.

"I was for letting Harbour Centre enter the port container business in Manila because [it is controlled] by only two. I was going for competition; I thought allowing Harbour Centre to compete would bring down container costs, which are [among] the highest at $1,300 per [20-foot equivalent unit]," Neri said.

The ICTSI media relations office declined a request from the INQUIRER for a phone interview with or a statement from Razon.

From Neda to CHEd

Razon, 47, is widely believed to be behind Neri's recent transfer from the National Economic and Development Authority to the Commission on Higher Education, purportedly because of Neri's proliberalization, free-competition stance.

But Neri said he was not aware of this.

When asked by Pimentel whether he was afraid for his life, Neri said: "I've maintained my stand despite the threats."

He said he had pushed not only for the liberalization of the arrastre port services but also for the opening up of the airline, telecommunications, ports and shipping industries. "These are the subjects of regulatory capture, where regulatory agencies may be dictated [to] by some powerful business groups," he said.

Since receiving the purported threat from Razon, Neri said he had not seen the ICTSI chief.

Close to FG

Razon, who is reportedly very close to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, served as the treasurer and major financier of the administration's Team Unity in the May elections.

Razon's name was also mentioned by Jose "Joey" de Venecia III of Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI), who first testified last week at the Senate inquiry into the National Broadband Network deal.

De Venecia yesterday said that when he divested his shares at Multimedia Telephony Inc. in 2003, these were "bought by Anscor (A. Soriano Corp.) and Ricky Razon, Fritz Server and Nono Ibazeta."

He further claimed that the group subsequently signed a vendor and financing deal with ZTE Corp., the Chinese firm to which AHI lost out to in the broadband project.

Razon, a graduate of De La Salle University, is a member of the American Management Association, Management Association of the Philippines, Pacific Basin Economic Council, and World Economic Forum.

He is a known friend of ousted President Joseph Estrada, who was recently convicted of plunder. He chaired the Erap Cup in 2000 and was the source of a P10-million contribution to Estrada's Muslim Youth Foundation.

In 2003, Razon was appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo as a member of the Public-Private Sector Task Force on the Reconstruction and Development of Iraq.

ICTSI, which also operates abroad, is the Philippines' largest corporation engaged in handling container and bulk cargo.

Its known total consolidated assets as of December 2006 is P19.1 billion. Last month, it reported a six-month net income of P1.045 billion this year.

ICTSI has port terminals in Manila, Subic, Batangas and General Santos City. It also operates ports in Japan, Indonesia, Poland, Brazil, Syria and Madagascar.

In March this year, it disclosed that it had won another port contract abroad, this time in Ecuador.

In September 2005, the Philippine Ports Authority approved ICTSI's petition for a 25-year extension of its contract to operate at the Port of Manila. *With reports from Riza Olchondra; Eliza Victoria, Inquirer Research*

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

TECHNICAL STOP: President Arroyo is being briefed by Philippine Ambassador to the United States Willy Gaa upon her arrival at the San Francisco airport, Ms Arroyo's stopover en route to New York.

GMA tours Naia airport terminals before takeoff

By Tarra Quismundo

INSTEAD OF GOING STRAIGHT to her waiting chartered plane, President Macapagal-Arroyo made a sidetrip before leaving for the United States on Tuesday night and toured the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) terminals in Pasay City.

The President took the time to drive by the still mothballed Naia Terminal 3, checked the facade of Terminal 2 and then walked through the arrival area of the Naia Terminal 1 shortly before her 9:30 p.m. US-bound flight, airport officials said.

"She's very particular to detail. Even one cigarette butt on the floor, she took notice ... Then when she saw cracks [on the floor or walls], she said they should be fixed," said Alfonso Cusi, general manager of the Manila International Airport Authority, who accompanied the President on her unannounced inspection.

None of the media swarming the red carpet at the Centennial terminal were able to catch up with the President's airport tour. Airport officials said Ms Arroyo also asked her security to remain discreet during the inspection as she did not want to cause alarm among passengers.

Airport security chief retired Gen. Angel Atutubo said Ms Arroyo first looked at the ongoing road-paving project in front of the Naia 3, currently undergoing repairs and completion for a yet to be announced opening date.

The President drove by, he said, then passed through the front of Terminal 2, drove through the cargo terminal, through the old Nayong Pilipino, turned back through Terminal 2, then used the ramp to reach the arrival gates of the old Naia.

"She assumed she was a passenger, as if she had just gotten off a plane. Where passengers usually went through, that's where she passed through so she could feel again how to be a regular passenger," said Atutubo.

"She went through the immigration counters and looked at the personnel, went through customs and the conveyor area. She just looked at the flow," said the official in an interview shortly after Ms Arroyo's special Philippine Airlines flight took off.

Cusi said the President gave directives on "what we should be doing."

"She told us always to show the best because her concern was how she can always bring the tourist to the country, how to attract them, and how we can show the best of the Filipinos. So we might have an old facility, but through good-natured people, through good service etiquette, we'll be able to attract tourists," Cusi said.

Ms Arroyo was then driven back to Naia 2 and boarded her flight for New York with a 68-member entourage, which included Cabinet members and lawmakers.

Protests await GMA in New York

By Christine O. Avendano

NEW YORK (VIA PLDT)—THE National Alliance for Filipino Concerns (Nafcon) based here are set to hold a picket on Wednesday at the Waldorf Astoria hotel, where President Macapagal-Arroyo is billeted until she leaves on Friday.

Ms Arroyo arrived in New York on Tuesday to attend the 62nd session of the United Nations General Assembly.

One of the issues that the militants will raise in the picket at the hotel, where other heads of states and global leaders are also staying, is the National Broadband Network (NBN) project, said Berna Ellorin, Nafcon special commissioner.

Ellorin told reporters that Nafcon also intended to take up the plight of the group of nurses known as the Sentosa 27 ++ in its continued fight against the Sentosa recruitment agency.

The nurses are pursuing a legal case against their American recruiter since 2006 when they left their jobs after complaining that they had been exploited and forced to work under unsafe conditions.

In return, some of the nurses were charged with professional misconduct.

The nurses will find out on Wednesday the fate of their appeal before the Suffolk county to drop the charges against them.

"We're trying to seek an audience with President Macapagal-Arroyo," said Maricell Duelo, one of the Sentosa 27 ++ nurses.

Consulate officials said the meeting was still being worked out.

VIPS AT THE LOUNGE: Ms Arroyo waits at the San Francisco VIP lounge w Martin Romualdez, Rep. Aurelio Gonzales, Rep. Datu Arroyo, his wife Kaka Villarosa.

4 killed, 5 hurt as Burm

From page A1

YEARNING TO BE FREE: In the photo relea the eighth day of massive protests, Buddhis against the ruling military junta in downtow

"They are marching down the streets, with the monks in the middle, and ordinary people either side. They are shielding them, forming a human chain," one witness said amid deafening roars of anger at security forces.

Riot police fired tear gas at columns of monks trying to push their way past barricades sealing off the Shwedagon Pagoda, Burma's holiest shrine and the starting point of marches over the past month.

Appeal for restraint

World leaders have appealed to the junta to exercise restraint since the protests mushroomed into a major revolt after shots were fired over protesting monks in the central town of Pakokku on Sept. 5.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown called for a United Nations Security Council meeting on Burma on Wednesday, vowing there would be "no impunity" for human rights violators in the country.

Singapore also called for restraint. The city state is the current chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), a Southeast Asian grouping of which Burma is a member.

"We urge Myanmar authorities to exercise utmost restraint," Singapore's foreign ministry said. "We call upon all parties to avoid provocative actions and to work towards reconciliation and a peaceful resolution of the situation."

France said it must be made clear to all Burmese officials "that they will be held personally responsible for all acts of violence committed against the population."

Monks arrested

As many as 200 maroon-robed monks were arrested outside the gilded Shwedagon Pagoda as the Buddhist priesthood, Burma's highest moral authority, went head-to-head with the might of a military that has ruled for an unbroken 45 years.

"This is a test of wills between the only two institutions in the country that have enough power to mobilize nationally," said Bradley Babson, a retired World Bank official in Burma.

"Between those two institutions, one of them will crack," he said. "If they take overt violence against the monks, they risk igniting the population against them."

Many of the monks wore surgical masks to try to counteract the effects of tear gas and smoke.

Some were beaten and manhandled by riot police as they were taken away from the Shwedagon, adding to the anger on the streets.

Despite defiant crowds swirling around downtown Rangoon, the number of marching monks was well below levels on Monday and Tuesday when they stretched five city blocks chanting "democracy, democracy" with no visible security presence.

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Deep-voiced men have more

From page A1

pitch and the number of children born to them, but not in the children's mortality rate," said Coren Apicella, a graduate anthropology student at Harvard University, who spent six months in northern Tanzania last year studying the nomadic, hunter-gatherer Hadza people.

"We found that men with deep voices have more children than their high-pitched counterparts," Apicella told Agence France Presse.

"But those children were not necessarily healthier, so it doesn't seem like deep-voiced men are passing on good genes to their offspring, as has been hypothesized in the past, but probably has to do with them having greater access to women."

Darwinian fitness

The study, which was a collaborative effort between Harvard University in Massachusetts, McMaster University in Canada and Florida State University, was the first to try to determine if there is a link between voice pitch in men and "Darwinian fitness" in humans.

"Darwinian fitness, in lay terms, means the number of children we have," Apicella said.

Apicella visited nine Hadza encampments and had 49 men and 52 women from the nomadic tribe "sit in my Land Rover and say 'Hujambo,' which means 'hello,' into a microphone," she told AFP.

The recordings were then analyzed for frequency.

Study participants were also asked to report how many children they have and how many were still alive.

"The man with the lowest-pitch voice in the study fathered 10 children, of whom nine are still living, and the man with the high-
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th some members of her delegation, from left, Rep. , Rep. Nerissa Soon Ruiz and Deputy Speaker Gerlie
MALACANANG PHOTO

a junta fires …

sed by the Democratic Voice of Burma on Tuesday, monks defy orders to stay off the streets and march n Rangoon, Burma.
AP

he crowds defied nings that military d be used against tests and a senior lling top monks to eir young charges consequences.

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itary waited until n Tuesday to de- ets and riot police n, a city of 5 mil- Mandalay, the sec- st city.

ies were put under ho curfew and put direct control of mmanders.

itary also rounded prominent dissi- cluding comedian who had joined s on Monday in ople to take to the

ell-placed source ers that detained v icon Aung San Suu Kyi had been moved to the notorious Insein prison on Sunday, a day after she greeted monks in front of her lakeside Rangoon home. The report could not be confirmed.

Residents in the northwest coastal town of Sittwe, which has seen some of the biggest crowds to date, said 10,000 people and a few hundred monks were on the streets on Wednesday, the Buddhist holy day.

The escalating tension in the former Burma gripped the annual UN General Assembly in New York.

China's influence

US President George W. Bush, in a speech to the assembly, called on all countries to "help the Burmese people reclaim their freedom" and announced fresh sanctions against the generals, their supporters and families.

The 27-nation European Union said it would "reinforce and strengthen" sanctions against Burma's rulers if the demonstrations were put down by force. *Reuters, AFP*

kids, says US study

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h earlier studies vn that men prefer ith higher-pitched ice pitch was not e a good predictor en's Darwinian fit- test led by Apicel-

test

nia, Apicella also a separate test with Hadza women, which has not yet been reported in an official study but which she shared with AFP.

The test seems to support the hypothesis that low-pitched men make more babies because they have more success in attracting a mate.

"When I manipulated voice pitch, giving the same man a lower and higher pitched voice, and asked women 'Who do you think is the better hunter?' they chose the men with lower pitched voices," Apicella said.

"Maybe it's because these low-pitched men are better hunters that they get a better selection of mates," she hypothesized.

"Maybe they can bring home more food for their families, so their wives have shorter inter-birth intervals because they are able to resume ovulation more quickly." *AFP*

ROAD MAP TO DEMOCRACY

Time for change in Burma, says Romulo

UNITED NATIONS—THE MILITARY rulers of Burma (Myanmar) should implement democratic reforms immediately as promised and avoid greater international isolation, Philippine Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said Tuesday.

"I believe it is time for them to implement that road map to democracy they had promised 10, 11 years ago," Romulo told Agence France Presse on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly where US President George W. Bush announced new sanctions against the tightly ruled Southeast Asian state.

The move came as the ruling military junta began a crackdown in Rangoon (Yangon) after days of massive prodemocracy protests.

Romulo said Burma must open up to avoid greater international isolation.

Asked to comment on the US move to tighten economic sanctions on the leaders of the military regime and their financial backers, Romulo said: "Whatever Myanmar decides to do in terms of implementing the road map to democracy, that is the answer."

Asean members

Burma and the Philippines are members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), which has taken a soft policy on Burma.

"As far as we are concerned, they (Burma's military rulers) have been promising Asean that they will move on the road map to democracy. That promise has been repeated so many times," Romulo lamented.

Asean foreign ministers are scheduled to meet on Thursday on the sidelines of the UN meeting, and the latest developments in Burma are expected to be among the key topics of discussions.

They are also scheduled on the same day to meet US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who is expected to press for Asean leverage to end the crackdown in Burma and to initiate genuine democratic reforms.

The other Asean members are Brunei, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. *AFP*

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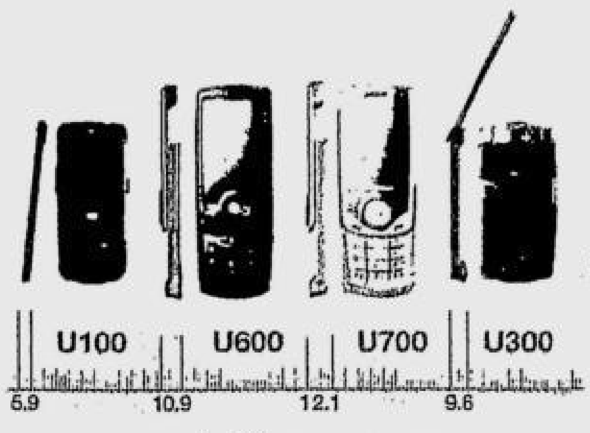

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Baffling walkout

EDITORIALS

THE THIRD HEARING OF THE SENATE INQUIRY into the controversial National Broadband Network went as advertised, with explosive testimony from alleged bribee, then Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, a vigorous denial from alleged briber Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and threshold questions on the very principle of executive privilege. There will be time to discuss these and other issues raised or revealed in the inquiry, but another bombshell lobbed in yesterday's high-strung hearing deserves a first look.

We refer to Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago's outburst and subsequent walkout. We find her conduct baffling—especially because of the powerful arguments she herself had marshaled just before walking out.

The former immigration commissioner did all of us a favor by saying a necessary and cautionary word about the limits of black-and-white thinking. She noted that conflict between the testimony of two witnesses did not necessarily mean that one or the other was lying; it could be, she said, drawing from her experience as a trial court judge, that both were lying, or both were telling the truth—or at least the portion of the truth as they saw it. Half-truths, she said.

We welcome this reminder, a healthy corrective to the tendency of prosecutorial senators to demand only a yes or no answer to serious questions.

Santiago then concluded: "We have to find out, not only who is telling a lie, but who is telling a half-truth. That is the difficulty."

Unfortunately, it seems that Santiago decided to make herself scarce at the first sign of difficulty.

The airing of charges and counter-charges from various witnesses and the seeming disparity, noted by Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, between the official paper trail and the testimony of executive department officials have created a complex and potentially confusing picture (we say potential, because we get the sense that the public at large is putting together a remarkably coherent picture of the NBN controversy). Surely Santiago can use her experience and her legal expertise to help clarify the picture.

But Santiago also concluded that the NBN issue was all about kickbacks or commissions. (This was a point already raised by Sen. Joker Arroyo during the second hearing, when he remarked, "This seems to be a battle among 'commissioners.'") She said she could smell what she called a "double-cross syndrome," insulted China by granting it the dubious honor of inventing corruption and then lashed out at the parties concerned: "I will not be a party to this squabble" for kickbacks.

And then she walked out.

We agree with her: something is rotten, something stinks. But isn't that reason enough for the Senate to continue the investigation, in fact to probe even deeper? If the ZTE deal pushes through, taxpayers will end up bearing the financial burden. All the more reason for Santiago and other senators to act as the people's tribune and expose (with fingers held to their noses, if necessary) the source of the stench.

Crimson courage

THE SIGHT IS ENOUGH TO CAUSE A LUMP in the throat. Tens of thousands of red-robed monks have been marching in key cities in Burma (Myanmar) in the past week, in a peaceful but powerful protest against the country's repressive military junta. They have been joined by tens of thousands of ordinary citizens, emboldened by protest actions that have grown in strength in the last month.

The monks in this devoutly Buddhist country enjoy a privileged status; the clearest proof of their standing in Burmese society lies not in the growing number of sympathizers they have been able to attract but in the unusually tentative treatment they have received from the military dictatorship.

Sadly, the generals who run Burma know only one way to resolve an issue: through the use of force. One general has already warned of decisive action against the monks if the protests continue. It may be only a matter of time before the junta orders the use of violence against the protesting monks.

It is a shame that undemocratic Burma remains a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Once the crackdown begins, will the rest of Asean simply pay lip service to the victims and then look away?

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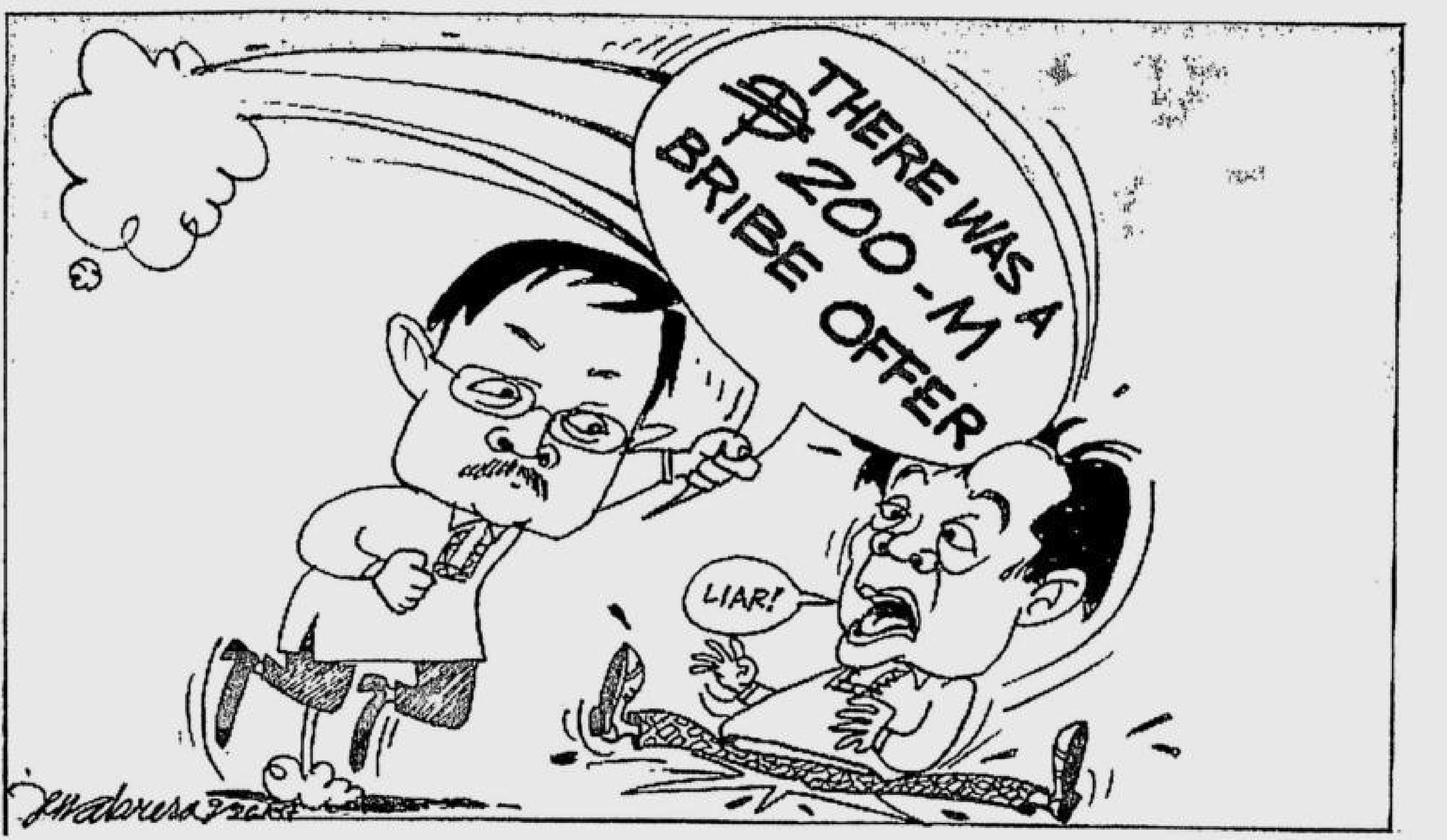
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Saffron revolt

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

LED BY THOUSANDS OF BUDDHIST MONKS, clad in traditional saffron robes, Burmese citizens have spilled into streets in people power demonstrations against the corrupt four-decade-old military junta.

Today's massive "Saffron Revolt" boiled over in less than a month from 400 demonstrators who first complained timidly against fuel increases. Now, mile-long protest columns, from Mandalay to Taung Dwin Gyi, demand the ouster of the brutal dictatorship.

The marches recall Mahatma Gandhi's trek in 1930 to assail the salt tax. And the 1986 People Power here spun off into Czechoslovakia's Velvet Uprising, Lebanon's Cedar Revolution, Ukraine's Orange Rebellion and Georgia's Rose Revolution. Presidents from Bolivia, Peru, Argentina to Haiti tumbled before peaceful citizen action in the 1990s.

But the blood-stained track record of Uzbekistan and Burma underscore the fact that happy endings are not guaranteed for all people power *golpes*.

In 1988, Rangoon devalued the kyat, triggering financial turmoil. The military fired on demonstrators. The generals didn't bother with a body count. But over 3,000 died. Since then, an Orwellian dictatorship has ruled Burma.

Today, "we are in uncharted territory," British Ambassador Mark Canning told The New York Times. "Stimulated by genuine economic hardship, (the demos) are being done in a peaceful but very effective fashion."

Indeed, misrule impoverished one of the region's richest countries in terms of natural resources. A Burmese's life expectancy is 60 years, compared to a Singaporean's 78. Infant mortality is 76, far greater than Vietnam's 17. Maternal deaths are 360, nine times higher than Malaysia's 41. Burma has 36 doctors for every 100,000 citizens, compared to 134 for the Philippines.

There's no official state religion. Most of the 54 million Burmese follow Theravada Buddhism. And successive governments associated themselves conspicuously with Buddhists. There are over 400,000 monks who are widely revered. Official data undercounts non-Buddhists; they probably reach 30 percent but are discriminated against. Translations of the Koran and Bible in indigenous dialects, for example, are banned.

There's no constitutional protection of religious freedom, for monks or minorities like Muslims, Christians, Hindus. The junta abrogated those freedoms with the charter in 1998, the International Religious Freedom Report 2007 says. "Government systematically restricted efforts by the Buddhist clergy to promote human rights and political freedom."

"Here in Burma, we are born afraid," a senior monk told the British Broadcasting Corp. ("In the Philippines, there are 60 million cowards and two SOBs," a US senator scoffed when the Marcos dictatorship seemed invincible.) So, where does today's audacity in Burma come from?

Pent-up grievances drive those masses of saffron-robed monks and once-cowed citizens, despite curfews and the military's threats of dispersal. A thousand filed past Aung San Suu Kyi's guarded house where the Nobel Peace Prize laureate has been detained since 2003. "The Lady (as Burmese call her) came out of the house, with two other women and cried," as the monks marched by. "She prayed with them but did not speak."

Today, people wave flags, including some bearing portraits of the fighting peacock symbol of the 1988 uprising. They hand out pictures of Burmese independence hero Aung San, deceased father of the detained opposition leader, Reuters reports. They ignore threats from a junta apparently taken aback by the outpouring. The censored New Light of Myanmar newspaper quoted Religious Affairs Minister Brig. Gen. Thura Myint Maung as warning: "Do not to break Buddhist rules and regulations."

This turned ominous when government trucks warned of "enforcing the law by military dispersal." It signals the junta's startled realization that waiting for protests to lose steam doesn't work. Daily the crowds grow. What has emerged is the strongest challenge since Suu Kyi won the elections by a landslide.

As the junta's options rapidly narrow, the threat of violent reprisal mounts. Thus, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon urged the "utmost restraint." So did the European Union, which pressed for "launching a process of real political reform." The Dalai Lama backed the monks, while urging the military to avoid violence. Sensitive about unrest on its flank, and hosting the 2008 Olympics, China makes noises about "stability and reform."

"Burma has become an embarrassment to its nine partners in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations," The New York Times noted. Asean has become increasingly blunt in calling for reforms. Carnage on Burma's streets could jack up demands for its expulsion from Asean.

"Since the 1970s, the trend has been towards … a gradual global shift from violent 'people's war' to non-violent people power," Jesse Walker notes in the study, "The Other Insurrections." Everywhere, military establishments are more reluctant to repress demonstrators, says Mexican author Elena Pontiawoska.

That cuts little ice with the generals who rule Burma: Gen. Than Shwe, a former postal clerk, who became head of state in 1992; Gen. Maung Aye, a xenophobe linked to drug lords in the Golden Triangle; and Gen. Soe Win, who smashed the democracy party.

"It may be too late to urge the generals to be calm. All bets are off. Even the Chinese will have no influence on what they do," warns Burma expert David Mathieson.

Will young Burmese officers shoot their own people? If and when the generals spill blood, do we just look the other way?

* * *

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'Tinimbang ka'

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

AS I WRITE THIS, WHICH IS WEDNESDAY morning, Romulo Neri is all set to appear before the Senate. I don't know what he will say. He himself advertises his wares by saying that what he knows, and can/will say, could drive us through the roof and/or out into the streets.

I don't know. His record so far doesn't give me reason to bring out the champagne yet. The last time he opened his mouth, he did send us through the roof by stopping, or helping stop, those of us who were already in the streets. His is the face I see every time I remember that we had an opportunity to end the "Hello, Garci" scandal and truly move on. Several of his fellows in the Cabinet resigned out of disgust, he did not. In fact he went on to malign them, calling them disloyal and treasonous.

Only the other day, he was saying that if he was ordered to go to the United States by GMA, he would obey because he was bound to do so by the oaths he had sworn. Your concept of loyalty and treason has nothing to do with loyalty and treason to the country, and your concept of obligation has nothing to do with obligation to the taxpayers (who are the ones who really pay you), you must be a little lost. Will he be found today? Will he turn from heel to hero? *Abangan*.

I myself have never really been a believer in the "accidental hero." True enough, heroism is an accident in that the opportunity to become a hero is not made-to-order. It does not present itself at bidding, like a witness summoned by the Senate. It appears from out of the blue like, well, an accident. Some people wait all their lives for the opportunity to show their worth, the way movie stars wait for that one big break when they could bedazzle the world with their abilities, only to never see it happen. And some people have it fall on their laps without thought or courtship.

You know what they say: Heaven is kind to fools and drunks. Who knows? Maybe also to economic czars.

The opportunity to become a hero is an accident, but the choice to become so, that is not an accident. To make that choice, well, that is the summation of what you are. It takes a lifetime to produce that instant when, from instinct or from a conscious or conscientious sense that "there is really no choice," or when, from a lifetime of doing the right thing or from the certainty born of repeated action that the rocky path brings you to where you are going and the one lined with fronds and palm trees leads only to perdition, you choose the path to Valhalla.

That moment has presented itself to Neri. That is the moment, solicited earnestly from heaven by others with a heroic complexion, or complex, when the world looks at you and makes the Biblical pronouncement, "You are judged."

As it is, his decision to appear before the Senate today bodes much promise. It is certainly a brave thing to do. Easier to be brave in cocktail parties, where you can parade your medals, than in the trenches, where you can scream from pain with no one to hear you. You've got family, you've got friends, you've got yourself, you'll think twice before risking everything, not least of them your life, to accomplish—what? Christ himself balked at the thought of being crucified for a humanity that didn't particularly look like it deserved it. Unfortunately, heroism and martyrdom often go together and even the most resolute Christian and believer in the afterlife must wonder if one's spirit, if not flesh, will truly be hovering around to hear the loud and grief-stricken accolades.

Neri's immediate predecessors who have applied for the job of hero can't come as a great inspiration to him. Chavit Singson didn't squeal on Erap out of conviction, or as his overnight believers then made it out to be, out of being struck by light like St. Paul on the road to Damascus, and needing to turn in a new leaf. He did so out of fear or out of being near-struck by an assassination attempt by Atong Ang's minions on the road to nowhere.

Even Joey de Venecia who has risen to seemingly heroic heights taking on Leandro Mendoza and company isn't squealing on GMA or her husband (are they really distinguishable?) out of nobleness, or as his current admirers are portraying it to be, out of a desire to salvage the De Venecia name. He is doing it out of vested interest, or out of a desire to promote his own family's bid for a broadband contract. Joker Arroyo wasn't entirely being a joke when he described the Mendoza-De Venecia set-to in the Senate as a fight between fixers.

It's Neri who stands on the brink of true heroism. If he decides to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth today (or yesterday when this comes out), it can only be from the need to salve his conscience and find peace with himself. Which is really what makes a hero, someone who simply does "what is right," with no thought of posterity, which is why posterity listens. It can only be from the position of someone who stands to lose the whole world (P200 million is pretty close to it) but gain his soul. But this is the part where I go back to heroism, though an accidental opportunity, not being an accidental choice. It takes a lifetime to make that choice.

Has Neri's life prepared him for this crossroads, to make the heroic choice at what he describes, a la the Phantom of the Opera, as the point of no return?

The Biblical phrase, if I recall right, is: "You have been judged, and found wanting." It is the title of one of Lino Brocka's most famous films: "Tinimbang Ka, Ngunit Kulang."

I can only hope heaven goes with Neri today and makes him supply a different ending to it.

Hyping up Neri

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE APPEARANCE OF FORMER SOCIOECONOMIC Planning Secretary Romulo Neri in the Senate was hyped for a whole week in the tri-media as no other event has been in recent memory. There were melodramatic allegations about his life being in danger and invoking prayers for his safety. So many groups, including members of that colored movement, kept breathing down the poor Cabinet official's neck for him to "tell the truth" and it seemed he hyped it all the more by making them believe he had the smoking gun. But in the end, Neri merely admitted having been offered a P200-million bribe by Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, but he refused to divulge what he discussed subsequently with President Macapagal-Arroyo on the ZTE project, invoking "executive privilege." The bomb proved to be a dud.

* * *

The Senate hearing brought out several things. One is the thorough uselessness of a setup where witnesses are made to confront each other in a public forum like the Senate, only to contradict each other; it only made the senators feel useless. Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago put it accurately when she noted that at best Neri and Abalos, under oath, were telling only half-truths or half lies, making the whole hearing an exercise in futility. It only highlighted the opinion of legal columnist Jose C. Sison that the court of public opinion (including the Senate) is not effective as there are no ways to check and counter-check allegations. The far better forum, in his opinion, is the court of law where witnesses are confronted with hard evidence in a neutral forum and where they're able to fully defend themselves, without the browbeating of very partisan politicians out to pin down the President.

What the hearings brought out is the odious behavior of some senators, especially Senators Jamby Madrigal and Aquilino Pimentel. The latter's bitterness over his son's defeat gave way to such *bastos* behavior toward Abalos seldom seen in the chamber. No matter how bitter he is, Pimentel should observe proper parliamentary conduct. Something has happened to him over the years, which saddens me because I knew a very different Nene long ago.

* * *

In times like ours, music is a great healer. We were invited by realtor Eduardo H. Yap to the "Autumn Festival" sponsored by the ancient group called Confrerie de la Chaine des Rotisseurs, Bailliage de Manille, at the Mandarin Hotel ballroom. The dinner affair sought to recreate one of the two most important Chinese festivals: the Autumn Festival, which dates back to the Zhou Dynasty 3,000 years ago; it was also a tribute to China as one of the world's top three culinary kingdoms, along with France and Turkey. The 80 guests, who came in elegant Chinese outfits, were treated to Chinese dances and songs related to the harvest moon, and a menu and spirits befitting the company of emperors, as well as good luck tips from renowned Hong Kong geomancer Joseph Chau—all woven deftly by emcee Johny Litton.

But for me, the pièce de résistance was the cultural program featuring operatic arias from soprano Elaine Lee and tenors Sherwin Sozon and George Yang, accompanied on the piano by Jude Areopagita. Capping the cultural fare was a beautiful "surprise number" courtesy of the Bailliage de Manille's chargé de mission Ed Yap. He went to great lengths to show us the video clip featuring the late great Luciano Pavarotti singing "Nessun Dorma" from the opera "Turandot" at the Baths of Caracalla in Rome many years ago, when his voice was at its peak. Watching and hearing Pavarotti, who passed away recently, belt out that aria with tears in his eyes made everyone's hair stand on end.

* * *

Fr. Pierre Tritz, founder of Erda Foundation and the Erda Technical-Vocational School and other organizations, celebrated his 93rd birthday last Sept. 19, among students from the most marginalized sectors whom he has nurtured the past 23 years. The students are assured of a bright future because of the untiring love and devotion of this saintly priest, who until now goes begging around the world for funds for their scholarships. Fr. Tritz is scheduled to leave for France on Oct. 17 for another such mission with Fr. Johnny Go, who chairs the joint Erda boards.

At a rousing birthday program staged by 600 scholars of Erda Tech, Fr. Tritz told me he's the oldest "working" member of the exclusive club of Jesuits in the Philippine Province, who are 90 years old and above. The oldest is Fr. Juan Ledesma, 102, who offers his daily sufferings for the Church at the Jesuit residence infirmary. Fr. Federico Martinez, 94, who is also ailing, stays at the Loyola House of Studies. Fr. Tritz, 93, still works at Erda in the daytime and is night chaplain at the Hospital of the Infant Jesus in Sampaloc, Manila. Fr. Gerard Braun, 91, a German, is now in Fordham University. And Fr. James B. Reuter, also 91, stays at the Xavier House in Sta. Ana and remains active in the communications field and with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. The "babies" are Fr. Miguel A. Bernad, 90, a distinguished man of letters who stays at the Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro and still lectures occasionally, and Fr. Santiago Leon, also 90, who still hears confession at Mary the Queen Parish in San Juan, Metro Manila. *Mabuhay po kayong lahat!*

* * *

Devotees of St. Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower of Jesus, will be happy to know about the annual tridum in her honor at the Carmelite Monastery on 4 Gilmore, Quezon City. On Saturday, Sept. 29, at 6 p.m. Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Rolando Tirona, OCD, of Infanta, Quezon, with the world famous Madrigal Singers singing. On Sunday, also at 6 p.m., Mass will be said by Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Hirschauer of Notre Dame de Vie, with the San Carlos Seminary choir. On Monday, the Feast of St. Therese itself, at 6 p.m., Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Honesto Ongtioco, with the San Jose Seminary Choir. Veneration of St. Therese's relics as well as the blessing of roses will be held after each Mass. (Devotees are asked to bring their own roses.)

Hospices for the poor, piglets for women

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

HOW EXCITING AND CHALLENGING IT IS TO work among the young, the promising, the poor who are strong and who could claim a future. How wonderful it is to count the successes.

But how noble it is to work among the forgotten and the least, among those who do not matter even to their own next of kin. They have no wealth to give back, just a smile and a thank you, and a lesson or two on how to love.

I have just read about an Asia-Pacific Conference on hospice care that is starting today here in Manila. The Philippines must now be on the map of hospice care.

The Philippines is now known as a training ground for caregiving and a source of health workers for the world—in both the domestic setting and institutions such as hospitals, hospices and nursing homes.

Professional caregiving in the domestic setting is commonly associated with overseas work or with the rich who can afford to hire caregivers. This chore used to be part of the household chore of *yayas* and houseboys, but now, one can hire trained ones who want to earn while waiting for overseas employment.

In the past, the word hospice conjured up images of old, sick, poor, unwanted and abandoned people with nowhere to go and left in homes such as the ones founded by Mother Teresa. Or of rich, elderly folk entrusted by their next of kin to the hands of church-run institutions where they could be cared for and live comfortably until they died.

Until recently, the word hospice was not commonly mentioned in the Philippines and the one most people knew was Hospicio de San Jose run by nuns near the Malacañang area and which, if I am not mistaken, dates back to the Spanish era.

The common impression was that hospices were for rich nations whose people were too busy to care for their old and sick family members. Filipinos usually take care of their loved ones in their own homes as culture dictated. But now new ways of caregiving for both the rich and the poor are in place and hospice care has come of age.

Mother Teresa-type institutions are no longer the only ones that take in the sick, dying poor. Committed lay persons have taken on the job as a part of their ministry, raising their own funds so that the poor may also experience loving care. The poor need not be terminally ill, and with proper care and medication, they could have a new lease on life and have meaningful lives once again.

I have had the opportunity of visiting and experiencing such places, and then leaving so much inspired and edified. One of these is Anawim, Home of God's Poor.

Anawim is nestled in a sprawling five-hectare property in the outskirts of Montalban, Rizal. It is run by Anawim Lay Missions Foundation Inc., the "mercy mission" of the Light of Jesus Community, a Catholic charismatic group founded by Bo Sanchez, a lay married preacher. *Anawim* is the Hebrew word for "the poor of the Lord."

Anawim's residents come from different walks of life and circumstances. Somewhere, sometime, at a certain point in their lives, they reached a dead end. For most of them, there was no one and nothing left except a last painful stretch of a life that had yet to be spent. To whom would they go?

The stories of their lives are varied and rich. Like the story of Jose Jobahib, in his late 70s, who once lived in the Payatas dump slums. He was all set to go to the Quiapo Bridge in Manila. He was taking with him Judith, his 48-year-old daughter with Down's syndrome, and with her tied to him, he was going to jump off the bridge. Anawim found them and they found Anawim.

Madre de Amor Hospice based in Laguna is not a facility in the strict sense of the word because the patients live in their own homes. In other words, hospice care—medication, counseling, etc.—is brought to their homes by trained professionals and volunteers. A good friend of mine, Monina Allarey Mercado, is one of the founders of Madre de Amor.

I was able to visit the home of a woman with an inoperable breast tumor the size of a 10-kilo jackfruit. That was two years ago. She was washing clothes, laughing heartily, when I found her. She is still very much around, Monina told me.

The Philippine Cancer Society also has a home-based "hospice care." I was able to visit terminally ill patients in slums and hovels and see for myself how holes-in-the wall could be transformed into comfortable "pre-departure areas."

It was moving to see poor and emaciated patients brighten up when the hospice team came to ease their pain and utter comforting words.

10 women, 10 pigs. There I was, a journalist, bringing to a 5-star hotel dinner a sheaf of paper with the digital photos and mini-bios of 10 very poor women of Dingalan, Aurora. I was submitting it to my friend, Hong Kong-based Daphne Ceniza Kuok. Though comfortably married and ensconced in Hong Kong, Daphne is still an activist through and through. She's involved with International Care Ministries and also helps Filipino workers in Hong Kong. The fire within her has not died.

I told Daphne that some friends of mine from NGOs pooled their money (P10,000 each) to help poor women in Aurora get out of the wreckage of last year's typhoon. Each woman was given P10,000 (which can't even buy an LV) worth of piglet, feeds, etc. (never cash) until the pig was ready for selling. This worked, and the sales earned the women a little something, like good meals for their families.

The problem: Every P10,000, as agreed upon, had to be taken back so that other clamoring women (*"Kami naman!"*) could have a crack at it, too. If only the women could hold on to it for a little longer, like two to three years, and make it run a full cycle. *Gets nyo?*

* * *

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

Hiding the smoking gun

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

These extracts from my liveblogging of the Senate hearing speak for themselves (the whole thing is on www.inquireblogger.com/current)

NERI: LET ME GIVE YOU FACTS. CHAIRMAN Abalos came to visit me at Neda, I forgot the dates, looked at calendar. Sometime last last year, early this year… I cannot recall what we discussed, frankly, I have poor memory… But I believe we had lunch meeting arranged by Chinese Embassy, one or two Chinese officials of embassy and of ZTE, Abalos there with us. I left meeting before dessert because ZTE officials were heavy smokers, couldn't stand smoke, don't know what transpired. Then a golf game at Wack-Wack.

Villar: Long game?

N: Nice game, chairman was charming. Something he said surprised me. He said, Sec. *may* 200 *ka dito*. Since he was host, I chose to ignore it.

V: What did you say?

N: Too shocked to say anything. Told my staff to be careful assessing project and with the costings, told my Neda staff what was told me.

V: Did you think what the 200 was for?

N: I guess—you know how it is in golf, you hit the ball, walk, discuss things a little…

V: That's all ?

N: Uh, for the moment that's all I have to say.

V: In the discrete investigation of the executive were you invited to shed light on this deal?

N: I was not asked.

V: Never asked?

N: Never.

Cayetano: 200? million? thousand?

N: No amount.

C: Abalos, will you confirm or deny that?

A: What's the 200? He himself doesn't know! (Crowd laughs.)

* * *

Lacson: Did you tell the President?

Neri: Yes.

L: What did she do?

N: She told me to ignore it, we then discussed other things.

L: How did you report it?

N: Over the phone. Chairman Abalos offered me 200 million pesos.

L: What did she tell you to do?

N: Not to take it.

L: News of a Palace investigation.

What did she do?

N: I was not privy to any investigations.

L: Was she shocked?

N: It was over the phone, I didn't see her facial expression.

* * *

Estrada: Neri, Abalos just said you were lying under oath. Is he also lying under oath when he forgot or cannot recall bribe offer?

N: I have a very clear recollection of that incident. Perhaps chairman forgot about it.

Abalos: I said he's lying when he said I offered him 200 million pesos.

E: Aside from Mrs. Arroyo, did you tell anyone of this 200 pesos, 200 thousand or 200 million?

N: My lawyers.

E: Would you confirm Mrs. Arroyo told you not to accept bribe?

N: Yes.

E: But she instructed you to approve the ZTE.

N: Well, I let the process push through, much as I told my staff…

E: Were you not pressured to approve?

N: Neda and boards collegial bodies.

E: You expressed reluctance?

N: Neda ICC minutes show usual debate… healthy debate.

E: At first you expressed reluctance?

N: No I like the project.

E: BOT basis?

N: We live it up to the agency as to how it's structured.

E: Abalos' involvement?

N: I cannot say, we had several meetings, there was the meeting upon invitation of Chinese Embassy. I told ZTE of President's preference that it be BOT, probably BOT. Take or pay. I made it clear those were wishes of President.

* * *

Pangilinan: Did you ever discuss it again with the President, the bribe?

Neri: No.

P: The deal, did the President follow it up?

N: May I claim executive privilege, because this involves conversations between me and the President.

P: Executive privilege can be claimed only by the President and executive secretary.

N: Conversations, too.

* * *

Legarda: Are you saying there was any government official who instructed you to favor ZTE? Was this conveyed by your invoking executive privilege?

Neri: No official higher than me other than the President your honor. We don't vote on manner of implementation. We vote on whether viable or not.

L: Were you overruled?

N: As I said collegial, my own personal preference doesn't matter anymore.

L: Did you discourage President from pursuing this project?

N: As I said this is covered by executive privilege, conversations with the President.

* * *

Pangilinan: Neri, are you invoking executive privilege on authority of the President?

N: Yes

P: Proof?

N: I can secure it, I was told …

P: Who instructed you?

N: Executive secretary told me to invoke it.

Rites of brotherhood

YOUNG BLOOD

Marc T.D. Cebreros

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I DO NOT MOURN FOR CRIS ANTHONY MENDEZ AS much as I mourn for him, who at the very moment I am writing is kneeling on the floor of a dimly lit basement somewhere in Quezon City. Blindfolded, he tries to summon all the bravery inside him to endure the pain of his would-be brothers' insults and jabs while reciting the four doctrines of brotherhood.

He remembers his mother and her admonitions as he took the bus that would take him to Manila, to the country's top university, and to a bright future: *"Huwag kang sasali sa frat ha. Ikamamatay ko pag nalamang ko na sumali ka* (Don't ever join a fraternity. It will kill me if I knew that you joined one)." A sharp slap brings him back to the painful reality of his situation. *"O, magqui-quit ka na? Ililibing ka namin ng buhay para di ka na makita ng nanay mong probinsyana* (Are you ready to quit? We will bury you alive so that your *probinsyana* of a mother will no longer see you)."

It all started with an innocent text, saying: "We would like to invite you to lunch this Monday. Be assured that this involves no commitment. We just want you to meet some people who would be helpful in law school and beyond."

He ignored the text but could not refuse his classmate's invitation to meet the partners of a top law firm. Law is all about networking, expanding your contacts, he was told. Indeed, what is there to lose with a tête-à-tête with the partners of The Office?

A 30-minute ride to Makati and a couple of hours of handshakes, a video and frat talk later, they asked him to quantify in terms of percentage his inclination to join. Sensing his hesitance, they applied less subtle pressure, and loaded up the incentives: "Why join in fourth year when seniority affords a lot of privileges?" "The fraternity would help you adapt to law school better than the rest of your block." "Even before you graduate, a junior associate spot is reserved for you; just make sure you maintain decent grades."

The bait became juicier and more irresistible. And then, the fat and elusive catfish swallowed the bait.

First, the rules: A neophyte is a slave to his masters. Some masters demand greater service, in light of their seniority. The Lord is the master of all. His word is law. Memorize the doctrines by heart, and no matter what happens, don't have the temerity of looking your master straight in the eye. Not to worry … think of it as adult role-playing.

The first blow is always the most painful. The blindfold serves its purpose. He has no way of knowing who hit him. He can only hear the taunts. "I'm Satan. Welcome to hell."

The hours seem to grind sluggishly, until the final three slaps, and the words "Arise" restore it to life.

"Hail, our brother N," the erstwhile masters sing boisterously. "Hail, our brother through and through!"

The next day, he comes late for his Persons and Family Law class. Fortunately, his sleeves hide the bruises from the searching gaze of the professor.

"Frat life couldn't be so bad," he murmurs to himself. "But why do I have this funny feeling that something bad is about to happen?" He has survived the final rites of brotherhood but the greater challenge of proving his worth lies ahead.

There are only five duties on the list, but the duties of a brod seem endless. Meetings, integration and projects—he wasn't sure, but a good dose of F.T. Hilbay's Legal Method has taught him that the reality of these words lies in actual practice. Meetings consist of an afternoon spent at the *tambayan*, showing off to the ladies, forcing the new aspirant to slap his face repeatedly while reciting the frat motto. Integrations are nothing but veggie food, Red Horse and macho tales. Projects are the easiest to do: just make sure to stuff metal knuckles and pipes and sharp daggers into your backpack, and a bonnet in your pocket, and you have a good chance of survival when the next rumble erupts.

Once a fratman, always a fratman. It's like marriage—permanent and indissoluble—his brods remind him. But the pangs of guilt and regret persist: the broken promise to Mama, danger lurking in every corner, the faces of evil following anywhere he goes, the man in the mirror, ghostly and pale, almost unrecognizable. He had felt Death's blows and heard him hiss on that painful night at the basement and eluded him. Now, he sees Death, face to face, in the mirror of life.

Marc T.D. Cebreros, 21, is a freshman at the UP College of Law.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Provocation

"I think it tells us, 'You should be very afraid, you shouldn't speak out about what's going on around the world.' And that's exactly the opposite of what we want to do as women activists. We are going to speak out. We are going to investigate what's happening to women. And we will protest."

—Human rights advocate Judith Mirkinson, after being barred by immigration officers from flying out of the country, along with two other visiting officers of the activist group Gabriela Network USA, because of suspected links with Afghanistan's Taliban

No winners

"I will be the last to advocate a violent mode for change. Because if there's one thing that had been impressed upon me, it's that the minute violence erupts it's uncontrollable and there are no victors, regardless of who survives."

—Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III

Outnumbered

"We might have been outnumbered, but we were never out-thought or out-argued."

—Administration Sen. Joker Arroyo, conceding that the administration senators did not have the numbers to block the playing of the Garci tapes

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Pardon will invite world's scorn

AFTER TAKING THE HIGH ROAD in bringing former President Joseph Estrada to trial and securing a conviction against him, the nation will be retreating to international ridicule and disrespect by cravenly trying to appease him with a presidential pardon—if certain officials and politicians have their way.

The judicial process regarding President Estrada is not yet over. Although a guilty verdict has been handed down, he has the right to appeal it before the Sandiganbayan and the Supreme Court, even as he continues to insist, up to now, that he is not guilty and that the verdict against him is unfair and unjust.

For certain officials of the administration to be offering him at this time a presidential pardon is wrongheaded and contrary to law. It took our justice system six years and considerable treasure to try and resolve this case against President Estrada. Now, for the sake of dubious political points, some would waive it all away.

This is not the intent or spirit of the law, nor the meaning of justice being tempered with mercy. The verdict must first be applied before any thought of tempering it should be entertained. Above all, there must be some sense of contrition or remorse on the part of the offender before he can be considered eligible for pardon.

In the history of the world, we find numerous examples of the honorable course for a nation to follow in handling the celebrated cases of former leaders who ran afoul of the law. That course is for the nation to be firm and fair, and to pay decent regard not only for the opinion of its people but that of the international community as well.

This is the course which Peru is now following in seeking justice against its former president, Alberto Fujimori, after seven years of trying to repatriate him. This is the course which Korea followed in trying and convicting two of its former presidents. This is also the course the Philippines has followed in bringing President Estrada to court. We risk the scorn of other nations if we just throw away the vindication we won at such great cost and effort.

—SEN. RICHARD GORDON

Emirates Airline is 'best in class,' stands on its own

THIS IS TO CLARIFY CERTAIN matters, regarding emirates Airline, that several recent INQUIRER columns and news items have reported on.

Emirates Airline is a profitable business that must stand on its own two feet. The airline does not receive subsidy and never had.

In 1985, the government of Dubai gave $10 million in start-up capital to the airline; later it also invested $88 million in aviation infrastructure, which included two Boeing 727 aircraft and the Emirates Training Centre building. Emirates Airline has paid the government of Dubai a total of $505 million in dividends—a return five times in excess of investment.

Our annual financial reports are audited by Pricewaterhouse Coopers and have been published via news releases. They are available on the Internet and public domains. Interested parties may log on to http://www.ekgroup.com/AnnualReports/Index.asp to access our latest financial results online.

Emirates Airline competes and thrives in the open skies environment of Dubai, which is served by more than 110 airlines from around the world. We buy fuel in the open market and pay landing fees and other taxes as every other airline.

The airline also firmly believes that government intervention in the form of limiting market access to competing airlines reduces competition, stifles growth, disadvantages customers and harms those airlines demanding protection.

The Middle East is not a single entity, neither is Asia Pacific. Putting all carriers from the Middle East in one basket would be as incorrect as saying that all Asia-Pacific carriers are one and the same. Emirates Airline operates on a wholly commercial basis and has grown incrementally because of a sound business strategy that demands sustainability. The airline draws from its own strengths and resources.

Since its founding in 1985, Emirates Airline has become a global, full-service airline. Its success has consistently been recognized worldwide by some of the most prestigious institutions as "best in class" across the full range of its operations. The group now boasts of more than 300 international awards from organizations, among them Skytrax, Australian Federation of Travel Agents, The Daily Telegraph, Ultratravel, Globe Awards, Official Airline Guide, Business Traveler Awards and Airfinance Journal.

We hope this clarification will provide a balanced view for the benefit of INQUIRER readers.

—GIGIE BAROA,
country manager-Philippines,
Emirates,
18/F Pacific Star Building,
Sen. Gil Puyat cor.
Makati Avenue, Makati City

LGUs in CARP implementation not a good idea

ACCORDING TO A NEWS REPORT, the Visayas Area Business Conference held in Bacolod City recommended a review of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law before the government decides to extend it. It also pushed for the participation of local government units in the implementation of the agrarian reform program, including in the identification and selection of beneficiaries. We, however, believe that this might not be a good idea.

First of all, there are quite a number of municipalities or provinces whose mayors or governors are also the biggest landowners. A good example are the towns of San Andres, San Narciso and San Francisco in Quezon province. In such a situation, can we expect the local government units to genuinely participate in the redistribution of large *haciendas*? In other areas, the mayors might not be landowners but the big landowners are their biggest financial backers. Naturally, they won't also help in implementing the agrarian reform program.

Secondly, allowing mayors to identify and select the beneficiaries might result in a selection primarily based on who the beneficiaries voted for and not on whether they are landless. Or the beneficiaries might be chosen based on their "subservience" to the landowners, who could pretend that their lands have been redistributed even though in reality the lands remain in their possession and under their control.

—RAFFY REY HIPOLITO,
advocacy officer,
Partnership for Agrarian Reform
and Rural Development Services,
parrds@yahoo.com

Congress asked to fast-track reform of Philippines' land valuation system

NEAL CRUZ'S COLUMN, "GREED in Batangas Port land case" (INQUIRER, 9/21/07) serves as a reminder that the government should put order to the chaotic system of land valuation in this country.

The system has deprived many poor landowners of their rightful income from the "true market value" of their property, abetted corruption, discouraged the growth of the land market, and spelled millions in unrealized tax revenues for the government.

As Cruz pointed out in his column, the rise in the market value of the Batangas property (subject of expropriation) from P298.44 per sq m (Bureau of Internal Revenue's "Zonal Value") and P336.83 per sq m (Philippine Ports Authority Land Acquisition Committee's estimate) to the astronomical P8,000 per sq m demanded by the new owners (businessmen and lawyers who bought portions of the same property from the farmers for as low as P600 per sq m) is unexplainable, mind-boggling and infuriating—imagine the government, through the PPA, unable to implement a vital development project because of this ludicrous situation.

Indeed, the same piece of land could have as many different "market values" depending on what use the appraisal of the property serves—i.e., "low value" for purposes of taxation (favors the owner who will pay low taxes); "high value"—as in the Batangas case—for expropriation purposes (provides unscrupulous individuals unwarranted quick money while multiplying the cost of government projects); "very low value" for the agrarian reform program (disadvantages legitimate landowners fully dependent on land for livelihood), etc.

There are a number of government agencies performing land valuation or appraisal. The major ones among them are the BIR for the Zonal Values as basis for land taxes imposed by the national government, such as Capital Gains Tax, Documentary Stamp Tax, and Estate Tax; the local government units for the Schedule of Market Values (SMV) as basis for assessment of Real Property Tax; the Department of Public Works and Highways for expropriation purposes; and the bank and private appraisers for collaterals or mortgages. Each of them use their own methodologies, systems and other considerations resulting in multiple and confusing valuations.

The 14th Congress should pass the Valuation Reform Act (VRA) which seeks to establish a set of valuation standards at par with international valuation standards, provide a single valuation base for tax and other purposes, separate valuation from tax administration and policy, and have a single agency to oversee and provide leadership in real property valuation.

—MA. PRESENTACION
R. MONTESA,
executive director,
Bureau of Local Government
Finance, Department of Finance,
8/F EDPC Bldg., Bangko Sentral ng
Pilipinas Complex,
Roxas Boulevard, Manila

Erap trial waste of public funds

AFTER SPENDING HUNDREDS of millions of pesos to convict Joseph Estrada for plunder, the government is going to let him walk a free man.

Our sentiments for him do not matter. Yes, he deserves pity somehow. However, he does not deserve to be a free man at all. Justice must be served. Justice must prevail.

—JOSEPH UMADHAY,
joseph_germin@yahoo.com

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$1.7 M for UP

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

SAN FRANCISCO—UNIVERSITY OF THE Philippines president Emerlinda R. Roman couldn't be happier these days.

In the recent convention of the UP Alumni Association in America (UPAAA) in this fabled "city by the bay," Roman came as the guest speaker for this biennial event. At the end of the gala evening, she had raised a staggering $1.7 million for the University of the Philippines. If that isn't a knock-out, I don't know what word to use.

Someone who was not even a UP alumnus wrote out a check for $500,000 right then and there without blinking. But more about this later.

The magic word for the evening was "centennial." Roman's message was compelling. "In less than a year," she began, "we will be 100 years old." While anniversaries are occasions for reflection and remembrance, she continued, "they also present an opportunity for us to look forward to UP's future." Citing part of UP's proud history, she noted that the institution has survived "two world wars, a dictatorship, two Edsa revolutions, and countless threats to its autonomy and freedom." And she thanked the faculty, staff, alumni and friends who have loyally stood by the university in good times and bad.

Roman presented an impressive PowerPoint review of her two years in office and an agenda for the future, both long-range and the upcoming 2008 UP centennial. When she assumed office in 2005, she put together a 10-point Plan (2005-2011) aimed at strengthening UP's position as the leading research and development university in the country. She stressed the centrality of science and technology in this academic vision and developed an agenda for the "Emerging Fields in Science and Technology Program." She created a Scientific Productivity System (SPS) to encourage productivity in scientific programs for national development. This groundbreaking initiative provides rewards to talented faculty and scientists who pursue cutting-edge research in the natural and physical sciences, medicine, agriculture, fisheries, engineering, social sciences and other disciplines. The first UP Scientist Program's "productivity awards" were given in 2006. Roman is concerned about faculty leaving UP and the incentives system of rewarding talent and productivity might be one way of making them stay.

Her leadership has also generated a "National Science Complex and Technology Incubation Park," which is designed to serve as the "national hub for the generation and application of new scientific knowledge in the natural and applied sciences and mathematics."

In line with her visionary goals, she has embarked on a number of structural changes ranging from tuition adjustments to downsizing unproductive programs, to upgrading human resources for the university's vast and diverse constituencies. She has streamlined administrative operations, and major units like the Philippine General Hospital have achieved a dramatic "turnaround" in their fiscal operations. Roman has a doctorate in business administration and was previously dean of the UP business college.

Roman's impressive accomplishments are too numerous to mention in this limited space, and leadership may regain lost ground for UP which has fallen by the wayside in recent decades and left behind by Asia's most outstanding universities.

The "powerhouse donor" of half a million dollars is the legendary Diosdado Banatao, sometimes known as the "Bill Gates of the Philippines." Currently a managing partner of Tallwood Venture Capital, he is credited with developing several key semiconductor technologies in Silicon Valley and holds several patents. He has become a major contributor to the PC industry. His Tallwood venture is the partner of another venture-capital firm that has invested $2 billion in various companies and has an extra $1 billion in the wings awaiting targets. An engineering graduate of Mapua Institute of Technology, Banatao holds a master's degree from Stanford and was given an honoris causa doctorate by UP during the presidency of Francisco Nemenzo. An experienced pilot, he flies his Learjet weekly. Actually, his latest contribution to UP pales in comparison with his 2001 donation of $20 million to Berkeley's Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society. What a spectacular Filipino success story!

Not to be outdone, megabusinessman Magdaleno Albarracin and construction magnate David Consunji threw in $400,000 apiece to the UP pot. I believe their companies provide for matching funds given by alumni to UP. In this case, the UP Alumni Engineers Association of America raised $400,000 for the UP fundraising effort this year. "Smaller hitters" like the UP alumni association of San Francisco headed by Dr. Manuel Gaspay kicked in $5,000, which was equally matched by Elizabeth Tsai and a number of San Francisco alumni like Luisa Yee.

Things are looking up for the UP centennial and the future, thanks in large measure to Roman's visionary and aggressive leadership, which certainly inspired the overwhelming donations to UP this year alone. What a show!

A University of Hawaii professor and director of Philippine Studies, Belinda A. Aquino served as UP vice president for public affairs in 1989-91.

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Farmers want Mike A land for CARP

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THE TASK FORCE MAPALAD has asked the government to put under land reform a 157-hectare farm in Negros Occidental allegedly owned by First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo.

But Rep. Ignacio Arroyo Jr. (Negros Occ., 5th District) explained that a corporation known as Rivulet Agro-Industrial Corp., not his brother, owned the piece of property located in Isabela town.

In a statement released yesterday, the TFM said the DAR should resume the process of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) in Hacienda Bacan in Barangay Guintubdan, Isabela, Negros Occidental, as the beneficiaries have waited long enough.

Further delay in the inclusion of the property in the agrarian reform program would constitute grave social injustice, the TFM added.

TFM president Jose Rodito Angeles said that six years had passed since the DAR provincial office told the 68 potential beneficiaries, 22 of them belonging to the TFM, that they were waiting for Mike Arroyo's letter of intent so they could proceed with the valuation of the property.

Offer to sell

The government placed Hacienda Bacan under CARP coverage through compulsory acquisition in 2000, but Representative Arroyo, then president of Rivulet Agro-Industrial Corp., offered it to CARP under the voluntary offer to sell scheme in April 2001, TFM said.

Teresita Depeñoso, Negros Occidental provincial agrarian reform officer, said the local government unit had foreclosed the farm owned by Rivulet for nonpayment of taxes and it was repurchased by Mike Arroyo.

Depeñoso said they would need a legal opinion from the Department of Justice since the property has been reclassified into an industrial estate.

She recalled that the local government reclassified the property into an industrial estate in 2005 since there was a proposal to build an ethanol plant on the property.

Reclassified

With the reclassification, Depeñoso said, they have to determine first whether the property could be covered under the agrarian reform program.

For this reason, Depeñoso said, the processing of the property for inclusion in the program has been held in abeyance.

At the same time, she said, the Land Bank would not valuate the land because it has been reclassified.

She said the property's landowner has to formalize the conversion of the land into an industrial estate by paying the required capital gains tax with the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Negros issue

In another land reform dispute, Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman and landowner Bob Cuenca has signed an agreement that could pave the way for a peaceful resolution to the conflict at the Hacienda Velez-Malaga in La Castellana, Negros Occidental.

NPA rebels out to get back Banahaw, says Army

LUCENA CITY—THE NEW PEOPle's Army has sent several guerrilla units to reclaim Mt. Banahaw, a traditional rebel strong-hold now turned into a haven for vegetable farmers fully supported by the government, military officials said.

Col. Jorge Segovia, head of the Army's 202nd Infantry Brigade, said the NPA plan was discovered from captured rebels and intelligence reports.

Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, Communist Party of the Philippines national spokesperson, could not be contacted for comments on Segovia's allegations.

Segovia said the guerrilla task force sent to reclaim Mt. Banahaw was a composite unit of 28 fully armed rebels formed out of NPA operatives from Laguna, Quezon and Rizal.

Mission order

"The primary order of the task force is to kill, destroy communication cell sites and burn equipment in the periphery of Mt. Banahaw. But we will not let them succeed. Their movement is now being tracked," said the Army official.

Segovia said the rebels wanted to recover territory that they lost in Mt. Banahaw due to government projects and programs in the area.

He admitted, however, that some isolated areas in Banahaw were still NPA strongholds.

Green area

Once known as a "Red area," a stronghold of communist guerrillas, the cluster of several mountain villages, lying along the slopes of Mt. Banahaw is now identified as a "green area," an alternative source of vegetables for Metro Manila and the neighboring provinces of Quezon.

The recent opening of "Sentrong Pamilihan ng Produktong Agrikultura ng Quezon" (SPPAQ), a central vegetable buying station for Mt. Banahaw farmers has sparked a vibrant agriculture-based economy for mountain farmers.

NPA lair

Mt. Banahaw was once the main lair of the dreaded NPA Melito Glor Command, the main rebel unit operating in Southern Tagalog.

It became popular in the 1980s as a rebel-controlled area, when communist officials, led by Rosal, freed four police and Army officials that the guerrillas had held captive.

Mt. Banahaw farmers described the situation in their area as "generally peaceful" compared to the tumultuous years of the insurgency, with Mt. Banahaw serving as a sanctuary for communist guerrillas.

Segovia said the high point in the transformation of Mt. Banahaw was the shift to livelihood through sustainable and environment friendly farming.

"From the military point of view, improved security ... is encouraging. This time, it is not the military who made the claims but the people themselves. It's a welcome break," he said.

Segovia assured the farmers of their safety from the harassment of communist rebels. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

MODERN LIVING

EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Bontoc youths, clad in their g-strings, clamber over the roof of this jeep to get the only ride out of the municipal center in Mountain Province. The town had just celebrated its 99th foundation day which encouraged new generations to honor their past now that urban lifestyles have become the norm, even in this north Cordillera community.

2 girls freed from abductor-rapist

LUCENA CITY—AUTHORITIES rescued two young girls from their abductor in a remote village in Pitogo, Quezon on Monday, a police report said Wednesday.

The report said the victims, aged 11 and 12 and both residents of Pililia, Rizal, were abducted by the suspect, Domingo Balane, on Sunday.

A police informant tipped off the police about the presence of the abductor and his victims hiding in Barangay Manggahan in Pitogo town, it added.

The local police office immediately dispatched a group of operatives and staff members from the local social welfare office and raided the suspect's hideout.

According to police investigators, Balane approached the victims in Pililia and convinced the two girls that he would buy them cell phones if they would join him in going to Tanay town.

When they reached Tanay, the suspect started to threaten the victims not to shout or call for help because he would kill them.

From Tanay, the three traveled to Pitogo town in Quezon province aboard public utility vehicles.

They reached the house of the suspect's brother in Barangay Manggahan at around 1 a.m. on Monday.

When the girls were asleep, the suspect entered the bedroom and raped one of them.

The investigators learned that the other victim had already been raped in Tanay. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

ROUNDUP

C. Mindanao workers get pay hike

COTABATO CITY—Private sector workers in Central Mindanao will receive P3-P5 in additional allowance per day. Maria Gloria Tango, regional director for the Department of Labor and Employment, said the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board (RTWPB) 12, which covers North and South Cotabato, Sarangani and Sultan Kudarat; and the cities of Koronadal, Kidapawan, Cotabato and General Santos, has approved the integration of the additional cost of living allowance (Cola) to the P16 being given to private sector workers.

Tango said the new wage will become final after a review by the National Wages and Productivity Commission.

Joel Gonzales, RTWPB board secretary, said under the new wage order, non-agricultural workers will receive a P5 increase in their Cola while those in the agriculture sector will get P4 in additional daily allowance. Those working in the retail and service sectors will receive a P3 allowance, he said. *Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

Girl, 12, raped, killed

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—A girl who went out to look for a stray goat was found raped and murdered in one of the hinterland barangays here on Monday night.

Police said Chin-chin Villarin, 12, set out on Sunday afternoon to look for the animal but failed to return home.

Her half-naked body was found a few blocks away from where she lived.

The National Bureau of Investigation said the girl was sexually assaulted before she was killed. *Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez, Inquirer Mindanao*

Docs sent vs dysentery

COTABATO CITY—Air Force personnel airlifted doctors and health workers to remote villages of Upi, Shariff Kabunsuan, to stop the spread of dysentery there, health officials in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao said.

The villages are only accessible by foot or by horse, and the arrival of health workers helped saved lives, said Dr. Tahir Sulaik, ARMM health secretary.

At least 47 patients were treated during the mission, according to Sulaik.

He said contaminated water could be the source of the dysentery.

Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

Anti-illegal fishing crusader slain

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—The head of an anti-illegal fishing organization was shot dead shortly after attending an annual conference of fishermen in Tanza, Cavite on Wednesday night, police said Friday.

Cavite police director Senior Supt. Fidel Posadas said Rogelio Montiel, 46, a resident of Tanza town, died instantly from a lone bullet wound in the head.

Posadas said they believe the killing was linked to the advocacy of Montiel and his group against illegal fishing in Cavite. He said the victim was instrumental in police operations against dynamite fishing.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Drug pusher nabbed in Laguna

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Police arrested a suspected big-time drug pusher in Biñan, Laguna Sept. 14.

Laguna police director Senior Supt. Felipe Rojas Jr. said Poland Magundayao, 42, a resident of Barangay Malaban, was on their list of most wanted drug peddlers in the province and was one of the biggest suppliers of marijuana in the area.

He said they have filed charges against the suspect who was locked up at the Biñan police jail. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

3 dead, 2 missing as fishing boat capsizes

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Five crew members of a fishing boat, including its captain, died when huge waves battered their vessel off the coast of Taytay, Palawan last week.

Palawan police director Senior Supt. Dennis Peña said FB Jehovah Missi, with 23 crewmen, capsized just five nautical miles off Taytay.

Among the fatalities were boat captain Heraldo Bertaña, 41, of Looc, Occidental Mindoro; Gidion Gario, 42, the boat's chief engineer, a resident of Navotas; and Conrado Montemor, 38, welder.

Crew members Jovencio Balelo and Wilson Sabundo remained missing.

Twenty-three other boat personnel have been rescued and were brought to a hospital in El Nido.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Boracay, Palawan worst hit by coconut pest

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—TWO TOP tourist destinations are suffering the brunt of the coconut pest infestation that threatens the country's coconut industry.

The coconut leaf beetle (*Brontispa longissima*) infestation spread to eight regions and 23 of the country's 79 provinces but Palawan and Boracay islands are the worst hit, said Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) Administrator Oscar Garin Sr.

Garin said the beetle had infested 47,000 trees in Palawan and 2,000 trees on the island-resort of Boracay.

Casualty trees

The flat and slender beetle, generally one centimeter long, feeds on the soft tissues of coconut fronds or leaves and eventually kills the tree. It spreads rapidly and attacks other palm and ornamental trees.

Garin said the infestation has brought damages to 145,789 trees in the country as of Sept. 19, resulting in at least P4 million in losses to the copra industry.

"The pest has affected one tree for every 3,500 trees and is spreading at around 15 percent every month," Garin said in an interview before he gave a briefing on the infestation to members of the Iloilo provincial board.

Quick spread

The areas include Bicol (47,000 trees), Calabarzon (40,000), Northern Mindanao (6,000) and Western Visayas (3,610).

Aside from Boracay in Western Visayas, the beetle also infected 1,500 trees in Iloilo and 110 trees on Guimaras Island.

Garin said they have controlled the infestation in Calabarzon and Western Visayas but they have difficulty fighting the spread of the pest in Palawan and Bicol.

Signs of the infestation were recorded around five years ago but it has rapidly worsened and spread this year.

Worse this year

Garin said the pest was brought into the country through imported ornamental palms, which were first seen along Roxas Boulevard. It spread later to tourist destinations like Palawan and Boracay where the palms were sold.

"We plan to contain the infestation by the end of the year but this could still spread fast if the treatment could not catch up with the spread of the Brontispa," said Garin.

Garin said the PCA had doubled its efforts to arrest the spread of the pest.

Expensive battle

The cost of combating the pest is around P10 million at the minimum, he added.

He called on all government officials and coconut growers to inform PCA of any signs of infestation in their respective areas.

An infected tree could be detected by the color of its youngest branch at the center of the tree.

In infected normal coconut trees, young fronds appear brownish while the outer older fronds are usually still green, according to a PCA advisory.

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Preserving original Marinduque folk music

By Gerald Gene R. Querubin
Boac, Marinduque

PROF. Rex Manuel Asuncion teaches musical notations of one of the folk songs in his research. GERALD GENE QUERUBIN

THE MUSLIMS HAVE their "*singkil*" and the Visayans, their "Usahay" and "Dandansoy." But what do the people of Marinduque have?

This question has inspired an advocacy by a music educator since childhood to learn and preserve songs and folk dances that are truly Marinduqueño.

"I heard old folks in my place singing old short songs aside from the *kundiman* and love songs with positive values. I listened to some of them and there, my research began," says Prof. Rex Manuel Asuncion, who is now director of the Center for Cultural Arts Studies of the Marinduque State College in Boac town.

Asuncion started playing simplified versions of Filipino folk songs on the piano during his elementary school days. He was also actively involved in folk dance presentations in schools and town fiestas.

While growing up, he noticed that the students' most-sought performances were limited to folk songs and dances of other provinces. They were not taught to sing or dance any Marinduque songs and dances.

"If we have 'Sarungbanggi' of Bicol, 'Atin Cu Pung Singsing' of Pampanga, 'Pamulinawen' of Ilocos, 'Usahay' of Cebu and 'Dandansoy' of the Visayas, Marinduque has its own folk songs which are unheard of yet existing," Asuncion says.

The professor envisions that the island-province will soon be proud of its songs that speak much about its traditions, culture, beliefs and lifestyles.

Asuncion has so far documented and notated the following folk songs:

- "Alamat ng Dalawang Puting Gansa" (The Legend of the Two White Geese), a legendary myth about two lovers who jumped into the river and became white geese.
- "Sulong, Aking Tandang" (Charge, My Rooster), a courtship song that depicts the intention of a rooster to a beautiful hen.
- "Isang Buong Dayap," a song of longing for a dear someone who died.
- "Lahat ng Bagay" (All the Things), a song that compares life to the scent of a flower.
- "Dalagang Parang" (Lady of the Fields), a nationalistic song that describes the ability of a Filipino woman to live and succeed in everyday life by helping her husband in the field.

Asuncion is now working on different versions of the traditional "*putong*" (royal welcome) and other songs.

Folk songs, he explains, are short songs that express love, loneliness, festivities, harvests and religious activities, and have no particular composers.

Just like the Tagalogs' "Bahay Kubo" (Nipa Hut), these continue to exist in the community and are sung by old-timers, he says.

People long ago tended to make songs because it was one of their activities that they did in lieu of modern technology, he adds.

Authenticity

"Before we perform music in terms of solo singing or choral rendition, we look first for its authenticity—and that is the beginning of research," Asuncion says. Music authenticity or originality, he explains, covers the exact melodic pattern, lyrics, time signature, key signature, tempo, style, influence, purpose, event and function, and how it evolves in the community.

Moreover, respondents must be at least 60 years old for music validation, Asuncion says. "I made them sing and record their voices individually and join them in singing to intensify the music. After a long hour of staying with them, music analysis follows and this demands more time."

"I go back once I finish my notated music and check some discrepancies with the old folks until I finalize it with them as their approval," he adds.

Old folks are willing to share what they know because they see themselves in the studies being made and they feel that they are part of the songs, Asuncion notes.

Learning the ropes

Asuncion learned music research and how folk dances and songs were documented through close interviews with National Artist for Dance Ramon Obusan, Dr. Larry Gabao of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and other music professors.

He obtained his Bachelor of Science in Music Education degree from the Centro Escolar University in 1995, and a Masters in Music, Major in Music Education, also from CEU, in 2006. He received a gold medal for excellence in research.

A baritone-tenor, he teaches humanities, music education and curriculum development under the MSC's School of Education and prepares music module for early childhood program.

"The only thing that makes them different is that dance focuses on figures while music is on tonal approach," Asuncion says.

"I have also seen how a Peking Opera was documented in Beijing, China, in 2006 and I could not imagine the level of patience on their performances. You know how slow some parts of the Chinese opera are," he says.

"I was even more challenged to document our own music, instruments, rural costumes (if there's any) regardless of its musical mood and tempo as long as it will identify my own native land."

Local folk songs, he says, must be included in the learning competencies of the music curriculum because they also comprise the basic elements of music. "It gives full identity to the locality and has the power to develop every learner to become more patriotic to his native land. This also magnifies the love for native tongue or dialect."

Folk songs can be further improved once they are written in simple piano pieces for beginners and set into recording for production intended for income-generating purposes in the form of video compact discs, he said.

Asuncion is looking forward to Marinduque's identity in terms of music heritage. He simply wants to respect, adore and appreciate his ancestors, who had lived and believed in the beauty of music.

He is grateful for the moral and intellectual support of his superior, Dr. Carlos Andam, vice president for research and extension of the MSC, and his co-author, Prof. Liza Marie Manoos, who does the technical aspects of his research.

Donations pour in amid relief work lull

By Ephraim Aguilar
Guinobatan, Albay

GIVING RELIEF ASSISTANCE 10 months after Supertyphoon "Reming" brought tragedy to Bicol may seem a little late, but for Tagas International, an organization of Filipino immigrants in the United States from Guinobatan town in Albay, it simply waited for the "right time."

That time, according to Tagas local representative Lorenzo Baybay, was when the election fever had died down and doleouts from politicians had vanished in a snap.

Baybay said the group foresaw a gap in relief donations when the government had become busy with rehabilitation and other projects and when nongovernment organizations had started to shut down one by one.

Tagas, or the Taga-Guinobatan (from Guinobatan) Association, raised more than $13,000 (over P500,000) from about 50 immigrants in the US. The money is now being used to assist some 100 families of typhoon victims and to hold feeding programs in evacuation camps in Guinobatan.

The organization also distributed 30 piglets to several families for them to start an alternative livelihood.

Quintin Garcia, 62, a tax auditor of California and president of the Tagas International, said he first learned about the tragedy in his hometown through television. Mudflows from Mount Mayon struck Barangay Maipon, burying houses and hundreds of people.

"I saw a very gut-wrenching and troubling scene, with hundreds of dead bodies stacked like animals outside the mortuary in Guinobatan. I couldn't sleep that night," said Garcia, who has lived in the US since 1973.

He said he received calls from Manila-based Tagas members asking for help.

"I sent appeals through e-mail and our Yahoo group. We received responses immediately a day after the appeals were sent," Garcia said during a feeding program in Barangay Minto.

Tagas International was formed in 1994 as a social club and venue for the reunion of Guinobateños in the United States every two years in the US. It began sending medical missions to Guinobatan in 1994, benefiting 500-600 people.

Band not timid about 'nationalist rock'

By Niña Catherine Calleja
Los Baños, Laguna

FOUR COLLEGE STUDENTS AND A HIGH school teacher want to change the youth's impression about rock music.

They formed the "Ephrot Act," jumbled from "Torpe ka (You are timid)" and they have been composing rock songs with nationalist content, calling them "nationalist rock."

"What we have is an old-fashioned goal in a modern approach," Adrian Luneta, the lead vocalist, said in Filipino in a group interview in Los Baños, Laguna.

One of their hit songs on campuses in Lucena City in Quezon and in the University of the Philippines at Los Baños is "Makibaka."

Although the band has no album yet, Luneta said its members were happy when they learned that their songs had been passed on through the Internet.

The Ephrot Act is composed of Mike Ona, drums; Edz Pagaduan, lead guitar; Louie Dizon, bass guitar; Leroy Valdeavilla, rhythm guitar; and Luneta. The best friends were classmates in the Quezon National High School in Lucena.

Their addiction to playing the computer game "Counterstrike" was diverted to music on their third year in high school. "In one computer shop near our school, the players were in queue so while we waited, we stayed in a studio on the second floor and watched a band's rehearsal," Ona said.

All of them had no formal lesson in music and only learned to play instruments from other band members out of curiosity. They decided to form a band and join local contests in 2001.

They just had to create noise to catch the audience attention as what other bands in Lucena were doing, Luneta said. In due time, they realized that what they were doing was wrong and aimed to improve their music and compose not only love songs.

In 2006, the Ephrot Act bagged first prize in a barangay contest in Lucena. That same year, they started performing at UPLB where, Luneta said, "we experienced a crowd who liked us and enjoyed our music."

Since then, they have become more passionate in doing rehearsals every weekend, walking three kilometers from Lucena to the studio they rented. "We could not afford the fare to the studio," Ona said, adding that they were already paying P100 per hour for the studio rental.

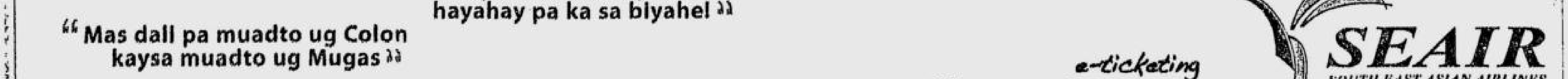
EPHROT Band members (from left) Leroy Valdeavilla, rhythm guitar; Mike Ona, drums; Edz Pagaduan, lead guitar; Adrian Luneta, vocals; and Louie Dizon, bass guitar. NIÑA CATHERINE CALLEJA

Modern approach

Eran Lagos, the manager, noted that the band's music was similar to those of Noel Cabangon, Bayang Barrios and other "alternative" musicians, but its "attack in music" is different. The songs are usually about the country and what is happening, but the type of music is rock.

The group has written "Makibaka," "Byahe na," "Astig," "Asam" and their other songs, based on intuition and observation. "We just write what we see," Dizon said.

At present, the band has recorded eight songs and is still working on seven others.



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Supreme Court of the Philippines
Manila

A.M. No. 07-9-12-SC

THE RULE ON THE WRIT OF AMPARO

RESOLUTION

Acting on the recommendation of the Chairperson of the Committee on Revision of the Rules of Court submitting for this Court's consideration and approval the proposed Rule on the Writ of Amparo, the Court Resolved to APPROVE the same.

This Rule shall take effect on October 24, 2007 following its publication in three (3) newspapers of general circulation.

September 25, 2007.

REYNATO S. PUNO
Chief Justice

LEONARDO A. QUISUMBING
Associate Justice

CONSUELO YNARES-SANTIAGO
Associate Justice

ANGELINA SANDOVAL-GUTIERREZ
Associate Justice

ANTONIO T. CARPIO
Associate Justice

MA. ALICIA AUSTRIA-MARTINEZ
Associate Justice

RENATO C. CORONA
Associate Justice

CONCHITA CARPIO MORALES
Associate Justice

ADOLFO S. AZCUNA
Associate Justice

DANTE O. TINGA
Associate Justice

MINITA V. CHICO-NAZARIO
Associate Justice

CANCIO C. GARCIA
Associate Justice

PRESBITERO J. VELASCO, JR.
Associate Justice

ANTONIO EDUARDO B. NACHURA
Associate Justice

RUBEN T. REYES
Associate Justice

THE RULE ON
THE WRIT OF AMPARO

SECTION 1. *Petition.* – The petition for a writ of *amparo* is a remedy available to any person whose right to life, liberty and security is violated or threatened with violation by an unlawful act or omission of a public official or employee, or of a private individual or entity.

The writ shall cover extralegal killings and enforced disappearances or threats thereof.

SEC. 2. *Who May File.* – The petition may be filed by the aggrieved party or by any qualified person or entity in the following order:

(a) Any member of the immediate family, namely: the spouse, children and parents of the aggrieved party;

(b) Any ascendant, descendant or collateral relative of the aggrieved party within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity, in default of those mentioned in the preceding paragraph; or

(c) Any concerned citizen, organization, association or institution, if there is no known member of the immediate family or relative of the aggrieved party.

The filing of a petition by the aggrieved party suspends the right of all other authorized parties to file similar petitions. Likewise, the filing of the petition by an authorized party on behalf of the aggrieved party suspends the right of all others, observing the order established herein.

SEC. 3. *Where to File.* – The petition may be filed on any day and at any time with the Regional Trial Court of the place where the threat, act or omission was committed or any of its elements occurred, or with the Sandiganbayan, the Court of Appeals, the Supreme Court, or any justice of such courts. The writ shall be enforceable anywhere in the Philippines.

When issued by a Regional Trial Court or any judge thereof, the writ shall be returnable before such court or judge.

When issued by the Sandiganbayan or the Court of Appeals or any of their justices, it may be returnable before such court or any justice thereof, or to any Regional Trial Court of the place where the threat, act or omission was committed or any of its elements occurred.

When issued by the Supreme Court or any of its justices, it may be returnable before such Court or any justice thereof, or before the Sandiganbayan or the Court of Appeals or any of their justices, or to any Regional Trial Court of the place where the threat, act or omission was committed or any of its elements occurred.

SEC. 4. *No Docket Fees.* – The petitioner shall be exempted from the payment of the docket and other lawful fees when filing the petition. The court, justice or judge shall docket the petition and act upon it immediately.

SEC. 5. *Contents of Petition.* – The petition shall be signed and verified and shall allege the following:

(a) The personal circumstances of the petitioner;

(b) The name and personal circumstances of the respondent responsible for the threat, act or omission, or, if the name is unknown or uncertain, the respondent may be described by an assumed appellation;

(c) The right to life, liberty and security of the aggrieved party violated or threatened with violation by an unlawful act or omission of the respondent, and how such threat or violation is committed with the attendant circumstances detailed in supporting affidavits;

(d) The investigation conducted, if any, specifying the names, personal circumstances, and addresses of the investigating authority or individuals, as well as the manner and conduct of the investigation, together with any report;

(e) The actions and recourses taken by the petitioner to determine the fate or whereabouts of the aggrieved party and the identity of the person responsible for the threat, act or omission; and

(f) The relief prayed for.

The petition may include a general prayer for other just and equitable reliefs.

SEC. 6. *Issuance of the Writ.* – Upon the filing of the petition, the court, justice or judge shall immediately order the issuance of the writ if on its face it ought to issue. The clerk of court shall issue the writ under the seal of the court; or in case of urgent necessity, the justice or the judge may issue the writ under his or her own hand, and may deputize any officer or person to serve it.

The writ shall also set the date and time for summary hearing of the petition which shall not be later than seven (7) days from the date of its issuance.

SEC. 7. *Penalty for Refusing to Issue or Serve the Writ.* – A clerk of court who refuses to issue the writ after its allowance, or a deputized person who refuses to serve the same, shall be punished by the court, justice or judge for contempt without prejudice to other disciplinary actions.

SEC. 8. *How the Writ is Served.* – The writ shall be served upon the respondent by a judicial officer or by a person deputized by the court, justice or judge who shall retain a copy on which to make a return of service. In case the writ cannot be served personally on the respondent, the rules on substituted service shall apply.

SEC. 9. *Return; Contents.* – Within seventy-two (72) hours after service of the writ, the respondent shall file a verified written return together with supporting affidavits which shall, among other things, contain the following:

(a) The lawful defenses to show that the respondent did not violate or threaten with violation the right to life, liberty and security of the aggrieved party, through any act or omission;

(b) The steps or actions taken by the respondent to determine the fate or whereabouts of the aggrieved party and the person or persons responsible for the threat, act or omission;

(c) All relevant information in the possession of the respondent pertaining to the threat, act or omission against the aggrieved party; and

(d) If the respondent is a public official or employee, the return shall further state the actions that have been or will still be taken:

(i) to verify the identity of the aggrieved party;

(ii) to recover and preserve evidence related to the death or disappearance of the person identified in the petition which may aid in the prosecution of the person or persons responsible;

(iii) to identify witnesses and obtain statements from them concerning the death or disappearance;

(iv) to determine the cause, manner, location and time of death or disappearance as well as any pattern or practice that may have brought about the death or disappearance;

(v) to identify and apprehend the person or persons involved in the death or disappearance; and

(vi) to bring the suspected offenders before a competent court.

The return shall also state other matters relevant to the investigation, its resolution and the prosecution of the case.

A general denial of the allegations in the petition shall not be allowed.

SEC. 10. *Defenses not Pleaded Deemed Waived.* – All defenses shall be raised in the return, otherwise, they shall be deemed waived.

SEC. 11. *Prohibited Pleadings and Motions.* – The following pleadings and motions are prohibited:

(a) Motion to dismiss;

(b) Motion for extension of time to file return, opposition, affidavit, position paper and other pleadings;

(c) Dilatory motion for postponement;

(d) Motion for a bill of particulars;

(e) Counterclaim or cross-claim;

(f) Third-party complaint;

(g) Reply;

(h) Motion to declare respondent in default;

(i) Intervention;

(j) Memorandum;

(k) Motion for reconsideration of interlocutory orders or interim relief orders; and

(l) Petition for *certiorari*, *mandamus* or prohibition against any interlocutory order.

SEC. 12. *Effect of Failure to File Return.* – In case the respondent fails to file a return, the court, justice or judge shall proceed to hear the petition *ex parte*.

SEC. 13. *Summary Hearing.* – The hearing on the petition shall be summary. However, the court, justice or judge may call for a preliminary conference to simplify the issues and determine the possibility of obtaining stipulations and admissions from the parties.

The hearing shall be from day to day until completed and given the same priority as petitions for *habeas corpus*.

SEC. 14. *Interim Reliefs.* – Upon filing of the petition or at anytime before final judgment, the court, justice or judge may grant any of the following reliefs:

(a) *Temporary Protection Order.* – The court, justice or judge, upon motion or *motu proprio*, may order that the petitioner or the aggrieved party and any member of the immediate family be protected in a government agency or by an accredited person or private institution capable of keeping and securing their safety. If the petitioner is an organization, association or institution referred to in Section 3(c) of this Rule, the protection may be extended to the officers involved.

The Supreme Court shall accredit the persons and private institutions that shall extend temporary protection to the petitioner or the aggrieved party and any member of the immediate family, in accordance with guidelines which it shall issue.

The accredited persons and private institutions shall comply with the rules and conditions that may be imposed by the court, justice or judge.

(b) *Inspection Order.* – The court, justice or judge, upon verified motion and after due hearing, may order any person in possession or control of a designated land or other property, to permit entry for the purpose of inspecting, measuring, surveying, or photographing the property or any relevant object or operation thereon.

The motion shall state in detail the place or places to be inspected. It shall be supported by affidavits or testimonies of witnesses having personal knowledge of the enforced disappearance or whereabouts of the aggrieved party.

If the motion is opposed on the ground of national security or of the privileged nature of the information, the court, justice or judge may conduct a hearing in chambers to determine the merit of the opposition.

The movant must show that the inspection order is necessary to establish the right of the aggrieved party alleged to be threatened or violated.

The inspection order shall specify the person or persons authorized to make the inspection and the date, time, place and manner of making the inspection and may prescribe other conditions to protect the constitutional rights of all parties. The order shall expire five (5) days after the date of its issuance, unless extended for justifiable reasons.

(c) *Production Order.* – The court, justice or judge, upon verified motion and after due hearing, may order any person in possession, custody or control of any designated documents, papers, books, accounts, letters, photographs, objects or tangible things, or objects in digitized or electronic form, which constitute or contain evidence relevant to the petition or the return, to produce and permit their inspection, copying or photographing by or on behalf of the movant.

The motion may be opposed on the ground of national security or of the privileged nature of the information, in which case the court, justice or judge may conduct a hearing in chambers to determine the merit of the opposition.

The court, justice or judge shall prescribe other conditions to protect the constitutional rights of all the parties.

(d) *Witness Protection Order.* – The court, justice or judge, upon motion or *motu proprio*, may refer the witnesses to the Department of Justice for admission to the Witness Protection, Security and Benefit Program, pursuant to Republic Act No. 6981.

The court, justice or judge may also refer the witnesses to other government agencies, or to accredited persons or private institutions capable of keeping and securing their safety.

SEC. 15. *Availability of Interim Reliefs to Respondent.* – Upon verified motion of the respondent and after due hearing, the court, justice or judge may issue an inspection order or production order under paragraphs (b) and (c) of the preceding section.

A motion for inspection order under this section shall be supported by affidavits or testimonies of witnesses having personal knowledge of the defenses of the respondent.

SEC. 16. *Contempt.* – The court, justice or judge may order the respondent who refuses to make a return, or who makes a false return, or any person who otherwise disobeys or resists a lawful process or order of the court to be punished for contempt. The contemnor may be imprisoned or imposed a fine.

SEC. 17. *Burden of Proof and Standard of Diligence Required.* – The parties shall establish their claims by substantial evidence.

The respondent who is a private individual or entity must prove that ordinary diligence as required by applicable laws, rules and regulations was observed in the performance of duty.

The respondent who is a public official or employee must prove that extraordinary diligence as required by applicable laws, rules and regulations was observed in the performance of duty.

The respondent public official or employee cannot invoke the presumption that official duty has been regularly performed to evade responsibility or liability.

SEC. 18. *Judgment.* — The court shall render judgment within ten (10) days from the time the petition is submitted for decision. If the allegations in the petition are proven by substantial evidence, the court shall grant the privilege of the writ and such reliefs as may be proper and appropriate; otherwise, the privilege shall be denied.

SEC. 19. *Appeal.* – Any party may appeal from the final judgment or order to the Supreme Court under Rule 45. The appeal may raise questions of fact or law or both.

The period of appeal shall be five (5) working days from the date of notice of the adverse judgment.

The appeal shall be given the same priority as in *habeas corpus* cases.

SEC. 20. *Archiving and Revival of Cases.* – The court shall not dismiss the petition, but shall archive it, if upon its determination it cannot proceed for a valid cause such as the failure of petitioner or witnesses to appear due to threats on their lives.

A periodic review of the archived cases shall be made by the *amparo* court that shall, *motu proprio* or upon motion by any party, order their revival when ready for further proceedings. The petition shall be dismissed with prejudice upon failure to prosecute the case after the lapse of two (2) years from notice to the petitioner of the order archiving the case.

The clerks of court shall submit to the Office of the Court Administrator a consolidated list of archived cases under this Rule not later than the first week of January of every year.

SEC. 21. *Institution of Separate Actions.* – This Rule shall not preclude the filing of separate criminal, civil or administrative actions.

SEC. 22. *Effect of Filing of a Criminal Action.* – When a criminal action has been commenced, no separate petition for the writ shall be filed. The reliefs under the writ shall be available by motion in the criminal case.

The procedure under this Rule shall govern the disposition of the reliefs available under the writ of *amparo*.

SEC. 23. *Consolidation.* – When a criminal action is filed subsequent to the filing of a petition for the writ, the latter shall be consolidated with the criminal action.

When a criminal action and a separate civil action are filed subsequent to a petition for a writ of *amparo*, the latter shall be consolidated with the criminal action.

After consolidation, the procedure under this Rule shall continue to apply to the disposition of the reliefs in the petition.

SEC. 24. *Substantive Rights.* – This Rule shall not diminish, increase or modify substantive rights recognized and protected by the Constitution.

SEC. 25. *Suppletory Application of the Rules of Court.* – The Rules of Court shall apply suppletorily insofar as it is not inconsistent with this Rule.

SEC. 26. *Applicability to Pending Cases.* – This Rule shall govern cases involving extralegal killings and enforced disappearances or threats thereof pending in the trial and appellate courts.

SEC. 27. *Effectivity.* – This Rule shall take effect on October 24, 2007, following its publication in three (3) newspapers of general circulation.

September 25, 2007

SC Approves Rule on Writ of *Amparo*

The Supreme Court, in its regular *En Banc* session today, approved the draft Rule on the writ of *amparo*, which is a remedy available to any person whose right to life, liberty, and security has been violated or is threatened with violation by an unlawful act or omission of a public official or employee, or of a private individual or entity. The Rule was drafted by the Committee on the Revision of the Rules of Court pursuant to the Court's constitutional power to promulgate Rules for the protection and enforcement of constitutional rights.

Chief Justice Reynato S. Puno, Chair of the Committee on the Revision of the Rules of Court, expressed satisfaction over the promulgation of the said Rule, noting that the Committee had submitted for consideration of the Court *En Banc* the draft rule that shall govern the remedy of the writ of *amparo* in just two months after the holding of the *National Consultative Summit on Extrajudicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances*.

"Today, the Supreme Court promulgated the rule that will place the constitutional right to life, liberty, and security above violation and threats of violation. This rule will provide the victims of extralegal killings and enforced disappearances the protection they need and the promise of vindication for their rights. This rule also empowers our courts to issue reliefs that may be granted through judicial orders of protection, production, inspection, and other relief to safeguard one's life and liberty," said Chief Justice Puno. He added "The writ of *amparo* shall hold public authorities, those who took their oath to defend the constitution and enforce our laws, to a high standard of official conduct and hold them accountable to our people. The sovereign Filipino people should be assured that if their right to life and liberty is threatened or violated, they will find vindication in our courts of justice."

Under the Rule, the petition for the writ of *amparo* may be filed nationwide or on any day and at any time with the Regional Trial Court of the place where the threat, act, or omission was committed, or with the Sandiganbayan, the Court of Appeals, and the Supreme Court. The filing is free of charge.

Besides the aggrieved party, the following may file the petition for writ of *amparo*: any member of the aggrieved party's immediate family (spouse, children, and parents); any ascendant, descendant, or collateral relative of the aggrieved party within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity; and any concerned citizen, organization, association, or institution, if there is no known member of the immediate family or relative of the aggrieved party. The filing of a petition by the aggrieved party suspends the right of all other authorized parties to file similar petitions.

Upon the filing of the petition, the court, justice or judge shall immediately order the issuance of the writ if on its face it ought to be issued. The writ shall also set the date and time for summary hearing of the petition which shall not be later than seven days from the date of its issuance. A clerk of court who refuses to issue the writ after its allowance, or a deputized person who refuses to serve the same, shall be punished by the court, justice, or judge for contempt without prejudice to other disciplinary actions.

A general denial from the respondent is not allowed. The respondent shall be required to give a full explanation and account in the return which shall be submitted to the court to ensure that he shall make a detailed return, which will not only seek the persons liable but also help in the determination of their compliance with the standard of conduct required of them.

The court, justice, or judge may grant any of the following reliefs upon filing of the petition or at any time before final judgment. These interim reliefs are the following: temporary protection order (TPO), inspection order (IO), production order (PO), and witness protection order (WPO). Under the WPO which may be issued upon motion or *motu proprio*, witnesses may be referred to the Department of Justice for admission to the DOJ Witness Protection, Security and Benefit Program, pursuant to RA 6981, or to other government agencies, or persons or privates institutions accredited by the Supreme Court capable of keeping and securing their safety.

Likewise, the court, justice, or judge may order the respondent who refuses to make a return or who makes a false return, or any person who otherwise disobeys or resists a lawful process or order of the court to be punished for contempt. The contemnor may be fined or imprisoned.

The court, justice, or judge may call for a preliminary conference to simplify the issues and determine the possibility of obtaining stipulations and admissions from the parties. The hearing, to be conducted daily until completed, shall be given the same priority as petitions for *habeas corpus*. The Rule has a provision on prohibited pleadings and motions so as not to delay the proceedings.

Judgment on the petition for a writ of *amparo* shall be rendered within 10 days from the time it is submitted for decision. Any party however may appeal from final judgments or orders to the High Court under Rule 45. The period of appeal shall be five working days from the date of notice of the adverse judgment.

The writ of *amparo* imposes a higher standard of diligence (extraordinary diligence) on public officers or employees than on private individuals or entities (ordinary diligence). There shall be no presumption of regularity on the part of the public official or employee. The filing of the petition for the said writ is not mutually exclusive with the filing of other reliefs (i.e. *habeas corpus*), as well as the filing of separate criminal, civil, or administrative actions.

The Rule will take effect on October 24, following its due publication and in time for the 62nd anniversary celebration of the United Nations. The *Summit*, among others, has resolved for the High Court to review its existing Rules and promulgate new ones to address the issues of extrajudicial killings and forced abductions. From the *Summit*, there was a unanimous request for the promulgation of the writ of *amparo* to address violations of the right to life, liberty, and security guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Constitution.

The writ is broader than its counterparts in other countries because it protects not only against actual violations but also against threats of violation of rights, as well as covers not only unlawful acts or omissions of public officials or employees, but also that of private individuals or entities. In Latin American countries, except Cuba, *Amparo* has been constitutionally adopted to protect against human rights abuses especially during the time the said countries were governed by military juntas.

Aside from the writ of *amparo*, Chief Justice Puno has said that the High Court will also promulgate the Rules to govern the issuance of the writ of *habeas data*. The writ of *habeas data* will compel government and military officials to allow families of victims of enforced disappearances access to official documents by invoking "the right of truth." The said writ has been used in solving the problem of extralegal killings and enforced disappearances in Latin American countries under military dictatorships.

Likewise, the High Court is reviewing the implementing guidelines of the writ of *habeas corpus*.

Justice Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez co-chairs the Committee on the Revision of the Rules of Court. The Members are Senior Justice Leonardo A. Quisumbing and Justices Adolfo S. Azcuna, Dante O. Tinga, Minita V. Chico-Nazario, and Antonio Eduardo B. Nachura. The consultants are (Ret.) Justice Jose Y. Feria, (Ret.) Senior Justice Florida Ruth P. Romero, (Ret.) Senior Justice Josue N. Bellosillo, (Ret.) Justice Jose C. Vitug, (Ret.) Justice Romeo J. Callejo, Sr., and (Ret.) CA Justice Oscar M. Herrera. Attys. Felipe Enrique M. Gozon, Jr. and Theoben Jordan C. Orosa assisted the Committee. Atty. Douglas Anama and Ms. Lida A. Pilapil are the Secretary and Assistant Secretary, respectively.

jbr

'Sec, may 200 ka dito;' I was shocked

CORRUPTION SCANDAL in the Arroyo administration deepened after the disclosure of former Neda director general Romulo Neri (at right) that Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos attempted to bribe him. Iloilo Vice Gov. Rolex Suplico is seated (center). REUTERS

From page A1

(CHEd), said the bribe offer was made early this year in the fairways of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City.

"We were on a golf cart he (Abalos) was driving. I was seated beside him. *Medyo nabigla ako* (I was surprised) since he was our host. I chose to ignore it," Neri said on questioning from Senate President Manuel Villar.

"No amount was given but given the magnitude of the project, I presumed it was not P200 or P200,000. I guess (it's P200 million because I was a Cabinet official)," Neri said.

On later questioning from Sen. Richard Gordon, Neri said he did not ask Abalos further and continued playing golf with him as "courtesy."

President's advice

On the advice of his lawyers, Neri said he informed Ms Arroyo of the presumably P200-million bribe offer.

The President, he said, told her to reject the money.

"I remember it was over the phone. I said Chairman Abalos offered me P200 million for this. She just told me don't accept it," Neri said.

He said he also relayed the incident to his staff whom he instructed "to be careful in assessing the project's viability, be careful with the costing."

PAGC probe

Neri said he did not know what action the President took although he understood that the Philippine Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) investigated the bribe offer. But he said he was not privy to the PAGC findings.

Ms Arroyo, who has tried to distance herself from the scandal, suspended the NBN project on Sept. 22, days after the Supreme Court ordered that its implementation be temporality stopped.

The scandal has put on hold two major land-lease projects covering 1.2 million hectares of farmland, which was to be used for growing produce for export to China.

Abalos, who was one seat away from Neri at the witness table, denied Neri's charges and accused the chair of CHEd of lying under oath.

"I don't understand what 200 he is talking about? How can I comment on something that the one himself narrating it cannot say whether it was 200 million or 200,000. Why would I offer him a bribe? He is lying as far as that is concerned," said Abalos, who is accused of brokering the deal in exchange for commissions.

Asked by Sen. Jinggoy Estrada to respond to Abalos' accusation that he was a liar, Neri said: "I have a very clear recollection of that incident. As the chairman said, he may have forgotten about what it is."

On later questioning from Sen. Richard Gordon, Neri said he did not ask Abalos further and continued playing golf with him as "courtesy."

Abalos said he did not broker the deal for ZTE.

"There is nothing to broker when the supplier is designated by the state," he said.

ZTE, a state-owned telecommunications company, was named contractor by China, which offered a concessional loan to the Philippine government for the NBN project.

"I became friends with this people. I do not deny I have close relations with this people. But I have never brokered for them as far as the NBN was concerned," the Comelec chair said.

$10-million offer

In the first two hearings last week, businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III said Abalos had tried to bribe him $10 million to withdraw his proposal and give way to ZTE.

De Venecia is the founder of Amsterdam Holdings Inc., which offered an unsolicited proposal to undertake the project.

Abalos denied the allegation of De Venecia, a son and namesake of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

"I have definitely not (offered a bribe) and I have no reason to," the Comelec chair said.

In his testimony, Neri cited three instances in which he met Abalos—at his Neda office; at a dinner arranged by the Chinese Embassy with ZTE officials, and at a golf game at Wack Wack.

Neri said only Abalos approached him to lobby for the deal.

He said neither the President's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, nor Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza discussed the project with him.

Neri said he discussed the project with Communications Undersecretary Lorenzo Formoso III, not Mendoza.

In good faith

In New York, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Neri acted in "good faith" when he testified in the Senate.

Asked whether Ms Arroyo's order for Neri to testify indicated she was supportive of the latter, Bunye said: "I think at the very least we could attribute good faith on the part of Secretary Neri and as to whether he's telling the truth, it's very difficult to say because we're not there."

Bunye said Ms Arroyo, who arrived in New York yesterday, was very well aware that Neri would be testifying in the Senate because she authorized him to do so.

Bunye made the statement to reporters shortly after Ms Arroyo and her party arrived at the Waldorf Astoria hotel, where she will stay while she attends the 62nd session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Joey de Venecia has claimed in the Sept. 18 hearing that the President's husband had thrust a finger at his face and told him to "back off" from the project at a meeting with Abalos and Mendoza and four others in March at Wack Wack.

'Chance encounter'

Abalos confirmed the early morning meeting at Wack Wack where Arroyo, Mendoza, De Venecia and himself were present.

He denied that Arroyo told De Venecia to "back off."

"I did not see or hear about such incident," he said. "We did not talk about ZTE."

Like Mendoza and Arroyo (who spoke through a lawyer), Abalos claimed it was a chance encounter.

"I saw Secretary Mendoza. Then FG (Arroyo) arrived. They talked," Abalos said.

He said he passed by their table then he left. He said when he returned he saw "Joey (De Venecia) and Secretary Mendoza talking in whispers."

He said Arroyo was at the other end of the table.

He said he passed by and bid goodbye because he was "avoiding" De Venecia.

Abalos said it was De Venecia who was "always pursuing" him in his office and at Wack Wack, an exclusive golf club where Abalos is the longtime president.

"Knowing that I am very close to this [ZTE] people, which I have not denied, he has come out and pursued me in order that I could bridge him with ZTE people *para makasawsaw dito sa kontrata na ito* (so he could be part of the contract).

Abalos said that the younger De Venecia told him that he had strained relations with ZTE. "The company, of which he was then chair, had business with ZTE for $12 million but it defaulted on the payment. Thereafter, JDV had divested his interest in the company," said Abalos.

De Venecia quickly disputed Abalos' charges insisting:

"I don't owe ZTE any money. I don't need, especially Abalos, to lobby for me for ZTE because I already know ZTE."

Who invited whom

Like Mendoza, Abalos said that it was Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and not him who initiated his meeting with the Speaker's son.

The younger De Venecia, however, said it was Abalos who was "always inviting" him to meet with him about ZTE.

Because he was not a member of Wack Wack, the only way he could have entered the club's premises was through the invitation of a member, De Venecia countered.

Some senators commented that Abalos figures in meetings with ZTE officials despite his claim that he is not involved in the deal.

Abalos, who De Venecia said played golf with ZTE officials in Shenzhen, China, was forced to admit that he had indeed been a frequent traveler to China after Estrada showed records that he flew to Hong Kong five times from October 2006 to August 2007.

In his opening statement, Abalos decried what he described "a well-funded and professionally managed personal attack against me" by De Venecia. ***With a report from Christine O. Avendaño in New York***

Neri, Abalos ignore each other

TENSION WAS PALPABLE between Romulo Neri and Benjamin Abalos early on at the Senate.

The two men arrived separately but ran into each other near the men's room. Each gave the other nothing more than a cursory look.

There was no handshake even when they were in the session hall. (They were supposed to have been seated side by side, but Rolex Suplico was seated between them.)

Neri and Abalos exchanged a smile as a throng of photographers milled in front of their table. Later, waiting for the hearing to start, they shuffled papers and took sips of water.

Abalos chatted with Ramon Sales as Neri sat quietly in his seat. Leandro Mendoza and Lorenzo Formoso talked at one side of the hall.

Jose "Joey" de Venecia III arrived as the hearing started.

Abalos was accompanied by his son Benhur, the mayor of Mandaluyong City. A lawyer handed him a sheet of paper as Neri was testifying on the alleged bribery attempt.

When all the witnesses rose to take the obligatory oath to tell the truth, Neri looked Abalos' way and they smiled at each other.

But Abalos stared at Neri when the latter dropped his bombshell.

When Neri brought the house down with his statement that he was shocked at the supposed bribe offer because it was "*medyo malaki* (quite big)," Abalos also laughed.

Despite the admonition of Senate blue ribbon committee chair Alan Peter Cayetano that they should "not show emotion" during the proceedings, the people in the gallery booed Abalos when he denied having tried to bribe Neri.

Juliet Labog-Javellana

Certified nerd and geek loves classical music, speaks Chinese

From page A1

school on his modest paycheck.

Regarded as one of the "poorest" Cabinet members with a net worth of P3 million, he lived with his mother for years at the family residence his father built in Quezon City in 1958.

Neri hails from a family of 10 siblings in Cagayan de Oro, which was Muslim for several generations. His parents converted to Catholicism.

'Incorruptible'

Senate President Manuel Villar, a classmate at the University of the Philippines, described Neri as "incorruptible."

"The guy has a simple lifestyle, he dresses simply and he is living within his means. I've never heard him talk about making a business (out of his position)," Villar said.

One of the most low-key members of the Arroyo Cabinet, Neri was temporarily assigned to the Commission on Higher Education when the controversy over the National Broadband Network (NBN) project awarded to the Chinese telecom giant ZTE Corp. broke out.

Ironically, while he did not cook up the deal for the Chinese firm, Neri can be said to speak the ZTE language.

"I can speak and write a little Mandarin, especially a few Chinese poetry," Neri told the INQUIRER.

"He speaks Chinese well. Yes, that's really ironic," said Imelda Nicolas, a former colleague in the Arroyo Cabinet. She recalled that one time, Neri interpreted a document written in Chinese.

Nicolas served as secretary of the National Anti-Poverty Commission until she and nine other key Cabinet members, dubbed as the "Hyatt 10," resigned at the height of the "Hello Garci" scandal in 2005.

Nicolas also recalled that Neri even does the i-ching, an ancient Chinese system of cosmology and philosophy which involves the tossing of yarrow stalks.

Very religious

"He loves classical music, and he is very religious," Nicolas said.

"He is really a technocrat. He's a nerd, he's a geek. He is the one who would always draw charts and graphs on the board," she recalled.

Figures and charts

Nicolas said that whenever it was Neri's turn to make a presentation to the Cabinet, his colleagues would brace for figures and charts.

Being a technocrat is a strength, she said, saying it served Neri well in the face of something like a P200 million bribery. "He has no political savvy," she said.

"He is well-liked. He is perceived as an intellectual but not the nerd who is the obnoxious-type," Villar said. "He is anticartel and antioligarch. As an economist, he is very pragmatic."

It was Villar who asked Neri about the bribery. But Villar said he never talked to Neri about the NBN controversy.

"I was tempted to call him but I assumed he was bugged. So we never talked," Villar said.

No-nonsense guy

Presidential Management Staff chief Cerge Remonde described Neri as a "no-nonsense" guy.

"He is the quiet type. He doesn't clown around," Remonde said. "He is not aloof but he is not one of the boys. He keeps his own peace."

Remonde said Neri was a "golf beginner" who occasionally joins the Cabinet golf fellowship at Malacañang Park.

Remonde said that when it came to economic matters, Neri was respected even by the President herself.

Remonde and Sen. Joker Arroyo noted that Neri labored under the reputation of being a Speaker Jose de Venecia's man.

"Some members of the Cabinet suspect him to be a JDV guy but that's really because he served under JDV," Remonde said.

Another Cabinet official told the INQUIRER that when Neri talked during Cabinet meetings, the joke was that "It is JDV who is talking."

Neri started in the Congressional Planning and Budget Office, a think-tank of the House of Representatives under the term of the late Speaker Ramon Mitra. When De Venecia became the Speaker in 1992, he retained Neri who served in that office under him for nine years. Neri was tapped to join the Arroyo Cabinet in 2001.

Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla described Neri as an evenhanded bureaucrat who allowed access to important information from his office to both members of the administration and opposition coalitions.

"I found him fair. He did not distinguish between members of the majority and the minority when distributing reports and information," Padilla said.

Like a professor

"He's like a professor," was Manila Rep. Amado Bagatsing's quick remark when asked what he thought of the former House technocrat who churned out reports and reference material to help lay the basis for legislative and policy directions.

"He's OK. He's a professional," Bagatsing said of Neri's work ethic.

Bagatsing, however, would not entirely vouch for Neri's independence in the ongoing Senate probe, noting his ties to the House Speaker.

In a move that surprised the business community, President Macapagal-Arroyo in 2002 sacked Dante Canlas as director general of the National Economic and Development Authority.

Neri, longtime head of the Congressional Planning and Budget Office, was named to the post.

Neri was reportedly endorsed by House Speaker Jose de Venecia, with whom he had worked as head of CPBO from 1990 to 2002. He also served as economic spokesperson in De Venecia's presidential campaign in 1998.

In 2003, Neri caught the ire of some lawmakers for saying that Congress was unable to pass a measure reforming the tax system because it was held hostage by tobacco and liquor interests.

'Booty capitalism'

He added that the "vicious cycle" of "booty capitalism," which he described as the oligarchy supporting politicians to capture "economic power," would control the outcome of the 2004 elections.

Neri earlier served as corporate planning manager of Canlubang Sugar Estate and Canlubang Pulp and Manufacturing Corp., assistant finance manager of Philippine National Oil Company and financial analyst of Mobil Oil Philippines Inc.

He was also associate professor at the Asian Institute of Management and instructor at the University of the Philippines College of Business Administration.

Neri has consulting experience involving organizations like Citibank and the Asian Development Bank.

In July, he was appointed chair of the Commission on Higher Education.

Neri was born on Feb. 1, 1950. He was the silver medalist of his batch at Ateneo de Manila High School. He graduated magna cum laude and class valedictorian from UP in 1970 with a degree in business administration major in marketing.

He has an MBA (major in finance and international management) from the University of California in Los Angeles. He is a bachelor.

Neri appeared calm and relaxed, as though he had steeled himself to take on Abalos.

"It's his word against mine," Neri said.

Asked where he got the moral courage, he replied: "I don't know."

"Corny *nyo naman*," he said when asked who was serving as his inspiration.

But he said he did not feel like a hero: "I don't think I deserve that."

He said he did not know if he was going to lose his post as chair of the Commission on Higher Education as a consequence of his testimony. ***With a report from Norman Bordadora and Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research***

Abalos feels Pimentel hit him below belt

By Beverly T. Natividad

ABALOS

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. complained to reporters during a break in yesterday's Senate inquiry that some questions thrown at him at the hearing were "personal attacks." *(See related story on Page A9.)*

He said he felt that some senators were treating him badly in retaliation for some of the decisions made by the Comelec. He pointed out that Comelec is a collegial body and as chair he is only allowed one vote there.

"If you were in my shoes, how would you feel?" Abalos said.

Abalos had submitted himself to the Senate inquiry against the advise of his lawyer Gabriel Villareal. Villareal had said that he had told Abalos not to attend the hearing because this might imperil his position as a Constitutional officer.

As a Constitutional post, the Comelec chair, Villareal said, has certain immunities to enable him to act according to his mandate without fear of retaliation.

Just prior to the break, Pimentel had an exchange with Abalos.

This was prompted by comments made by Abalos about an *"utang na loob"*—debt of gratitude— he owed the senator for appointing him as officer in charge in Mandaluyong after the 1986 Edsa revolution.

Pimentel told Abalos that there was no need to make such a comment since he never expected him to do something in return for it.

Abalos then said that his comments were in relation to "insinuations" earlier made by Pimentel to the effect that Abalos was "close to the Zubiris."

The exchange then moved to the issue of the Comelec's proclamation of Juan Miguel Zubiri as the 12th winning senator, instead of Pimentel's son, Koko Pimentel, in the May elections.

Abalos said some of the side comments by the senators, particularly Pimentel, were all meant "just to embarrass" him.

This included an oblique reference made by Pimentel to Abalos' meeting with members of Zubiri's family at a posh hotel at the height of the counting of votes in the tightly contested senatorial race between Zubiri and Pimentel's son.

Abalos denied there was anything conspiratorial in that meeting, stressing that it was a chance encounter.

Solons cross party lines; impeach rap vs Abalos on

From page A1

Secretary Romulo Neri in order to win approval for a Chinese project to build a national broadband network across the country.

Abalos, who denied the allegation, said he was prepared to face the impeachment case but expressed concern he might not get a fair deal.

"This is a numbers game so I don't know. Especially here, I am going against the son of the Speaker, so I don't know," Abalos, speaking in Filipino, said in an interview.

One of Abalos' accusers in the bribery scandal is Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, son of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Both administration and opposition congressmen said there may now be a sufficient basis to file an impeachment complaint against Abalos.

Deputy Majority Leader Crispin Remulla said Neri's testimony at the Senate about Abalos allegedly offering him what he understood to be a P200-million bribe would provide a basis for an impeachment.

Time factor

"The problem is the timeline. (The impeachment process) might not get finished," the Cavite lawmaker told the INQUIRER.

Abalos is due to retire from the Comelec in February.

Congress is going on a break from Oct. 13 to Nov. 4 and again from Dec. 22 to Jan. 20. Thus, the legislature will have barely two weeks of sessions before Abalos' retirement month.

"When that happens, he may just have to face antigraft charges before the Ombudsman," Remulla said.

He pointed out that an impeachment complaint would have to be heard in the House of Representatives committee on justice before being tackled in the plenary.

"Then you'd still have to organize the prosecutorial team. There is a time factor," Remulla said.

'Unimpeachable evidence'

Isabela Rep. Georgidi Aggabao, another administration lawmaker, said there was "more than enough" evidence against Abalos, pointing out that Neri's testimony corroborated that of Joey de Venecia.

"That (Neri's testimony) is unimpeachable ... evidence buttressing what Joey has posited from the very beginning, that Abalos (offered) bribes," Aggabao said.

Palawan Rep. Abraham Mitra, a member of the administration coalition, said it would not require too many votes to pursue an impeachment complaint.

'Ball is rolling'

"One verified complaint and two House endorsers and the ball is rolling. Whether this would snowball and cross the threshold that would merit a Senate trial is the challenge before the opposition," Mitra said.

"His impeachment is imminent," said Deputy Minority Leader Risa Hontiveros.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño said: "Congress now has enough basis to impeach Abalos. It's the political will to do it that is now needed."

"The grounds for Abalos' impeachment will include bribery, graft and corruption, and betrayal of public trust. We will also propose the inclusion of electoral fraud in 2004 and in 2007," he added.

"I think the minority has enough materials to impeach Chairman Abalos," opposition Rep. Rufus Rodriguez said.

Why wait?

Hontiveros said Abalos need not wait for an impeachment.

THE MAN WHO STARTED IT ALL, Jose de Venecia III eyes Abalos and Neri, the main protagonists in Wednesday's hearing at the Senate.
EDWIN BACASMAS

"He might as well resign now and we really hope that he already prepared his resignation letter," she said.

"He doesn't deserve to stay in public office, not even a minute longer."

Not taken seriously

Cibac Rep. Joel Villanueva said the House minority was hoping "to finally get him (Abalos) out of the Comelec and get the chance to overhaul the electoral body."

One impeachment complaint has already been filed against Abalos, courtesy of lawyer Oliver Lozano, the man who also filed unsuccessful impeachment cases against Ms Arroyo.

"Nobody takes him seriously," Hontiveros said.

IN THE KNOW

No stranger to controversies

BENJAMIN ABALOS SR. IS NO STRANGER to controversies.

The 72-year-old chair of the Commission on Elections has been accused of committing irregularities in relation to election modernization, and even of "single-handedly" undermining the credibility of the electoral process.

In January 2004, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. filed in the Office of the Ombudsman graft charges against Abalos and six Comelec commissioners over alleged irregularities in the P1.3-billion poll automation contract with Mega Pacific eSolutions Inc.

The Comelec in April 2003 awarded the contract to Mega Pacific as part of its modernization program. However, the Supreme Court declared the contract null and void in January 2004 on the grounds that the Comelec did not abide by the law in its bidding procedures.

In its decision, the court also asked the Office of the Ombudsman to determine the criminal liability of the public officials involved.

In October last year, the Ombudsman cleared Abalos of the charges, saying there was "no evidence of malice, bad faith and partiality to warrant an indictment."

Shock and awe

It was also during Abalos' term as Comelec chair that the "Hello Garci" scandal broke out. The controversial recordings of alleged conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and then Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano supposedly proved she cheated in the 2004 presidential elections.

The 2007 polls are also said to have been marked by widespread fraud. "There is shock and awe over the capacity for incompetence of the Comelec under Abalos … [Abalos] should be blamed for single-handedly demolishing the integrity of the electoral process," Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel said.

Decades before he got involved in these controversies, Abalos was one of those who struggled against injustices committed by the Marcos dictatorship.

Abalos said his critical views of the Marcos administration were the reason the dictator disallowed him from assuming his post as mayor of Mandaluyong in 1980.

After Marcos was ousted in 1986, his successor, Corazon Aquino, appointed Abalos officer in charge of Mandaluyong, which was a municipality then.

He was elected mayor of Mandaluyong in 1988, a position he held until 1998. It was during his tenure that Mandaluyong became a city. He was succeeded by his son, Benjamin Jr., more commonly known as Benhur.

Father and son

In 2001, father and son were charged with plunder in the Ombudsman for allegedly stealing P719 million from Mandaluyong City's coffers during their terms. The Ombudsman has since dismissed the charges.

Before becoming mayor, the elder Abalos had served as assistant city fiscal of Manila, municipal court judge and chair of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

Abalos was born in Mandaluyong on Sept. 21, 1935, to Eufrocina Santos and Ciriaco Abalos. Living in poverty, the couple allowed a close relative to adopt their youngest child, Rosalinda, to ensure a good future for her.

Despite poverty, the young Benjamin graduated from the Mandaluyong Elementary School with the highest honors, and finished high school in three years at the Jose Rizal College. He received his law degree from the Manuel L. Quezon University at the age of 21, the first in his family to earn a college degree.

Odd jobs

Abalos supported his college education by working as factory worker, messenger, janitor and caddy at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club. Decades later, he was elected president of the exclusive club.

Abalos is married to the former Corazon Pineda de Castro, with whom he has five children—Ma. Corazon, Benjamin Jr., Arnold, Jonathan and Joy. *Cyril L. Bonabente and Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research*

Administration senators gang up on JDV III, Neri

From page A1

Makati Business Club were concerned, the day belonged to former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri.

One administration senator, Juan Ponce Enrile, tried to implicate Speaker Jose de Venecia in the scandal, producing a document purportedly showing that the House leader had taken a more active role in the wheeling and dealing for the NBN contract—won by China's ZTE Corp.—than earlier perceived.

Another administration senator, Joker Arroyo, said: "This is a hearing where we can never really establish the truth. One resource person makes an allegation, the other one denies ... So how do we decide this?"

"The case here is the word of one against the word of the other, " he added.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago had a mouthful to say about the rival claims of businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, on one hand, and Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza, on the other.

'Double-cross syndrome'

"I'm afraid the Senate is being manipulated by two groups contending for at least a kickback on the ZTE contract of at least P1.5 billion," she said.

"The denials and the identifications are positive; there is no ambiguity or ambivalence. It is not necessary that one is telling the truth and the other one is telling a lie," Santiago said.

"It is possible that both camps (from the opposition and the administration), 'except Neda Director General Neri,' are competing for the P1.5 billion," she said.

OVER AT THE PALACE, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita says "we could not make heads or tails of this bribery."
LYN RILLON

"DOUBLE-CROSS SYNDROME": Exasperated Sen. Miriam Santiago scolds the principals in Wednesday's hearing for wasting the Senate's time over a case that she denigrates as a mere "fight over your own kickbacks."
ROGER MARGALLO

Santiago described the Joey de Venecia-Abalos standoff as reflective of "a double-cross syndrome."

" Our job is to find out who double-crossed whom," she said.

Santiago said that instead of focusing on more productive issues, "here we are in the middle of a "Mafia-like confrontation." "Why don't they just drop each other off the usual way? Why bring it here in the Senate? Why don't they just kill each other in the streets?" Santiago said in an interview after walking out of the session hall.

'Chinese invented corruption'

Santiago even berated the Chinese for having " invented corruption for all of human civilization" which, she said, explained their interest in giving out golf invitations, free dinners and free tickets to China.

"We all know that when we are public officials, we are not invited because of our physical or sexual good looks. We are being invited in connection with a certain government project. That is my observation," said Santiago.

Enrile produced a letter from an official of Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI) showing Speaker De Venecia purportedly had a direct hand in AHI's project. His son, Joey de Venecia, is founder and a stockholder of AHI.

Speaker's hand

Enrile quoted a Dec. 4, 2006, letter of AHI managing director Ernesto C. Garcia addressed to Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza stating: "The Speaker's office, and I repeat the Speaker's office, had instructed me (Garcia) to forward the attached material to your office, ASAP."

Enrile noted that Garcia's letter contained a draft endorsement of AHI's NBN project for the signature of Mendoza and intended for Neri.

Mendoza did not sign the proposed agreement.

"In other words, the ZTE project of Amsterdam Holdings was none other than the project of Speaker De Venecia like the NorthRail project," Enrile said.

Neri's hour

Neri was not spared the administration senators' biting criticism for supposedly supporting the young De Venecia's project proposal.

Neri strongly denied supporting the project, stressing that he only liked its concept.

But to civil society leaders, it was Neri's hour.

Despite invoking executive privilege when asked about his conversations with Ms Arroyo, Neri was able to "connect the dots" about the NBN project, said former Presidential Peace Adviser Terecita "Ging" Deles.

Executive privilege is the right of a president and high-level officials authorized by her to withhold information from Congress, the courts, and ultimately the public regarding "state secrets," such as those affecting confidential military, diplomatic and other national security matters. *(Story on Page A1.)*

"I think the dots are being connected, more aspects of the project are coming out," said Deles, a convenor of the Black & White Movement, a group that campaigned for Ms Arroyo's resignation at the height of the "Hello, Garci" wiretapping scandal.

Lack of credibility

"Neri seems to be standing up to scrutiny," Leah Navarro, another Black and White Movement member, added.

Navarro slammed Abalos, who accused Neri of lying after the latter testified that Abalos had offered him bribe to secure approval of the deal with ZTE.

"No one in this room is giving Abalos any credibility," Navarro said.

Fides Lim, a freelance writer, said: "Its Neri's day, so far. But the fact that he invoked executive privilege means that he is holding back."

Lawyer Ernesto Francisco Jr. praised Neri for "being truthful."

Why was there no probe?

"The problem is with the President. When Neri informed her about the bribe attempt, she should have ordered an investigation. But she did not. She has to explain that to the people," Francisco said.

Francisco has filed a complaint with the Ombudsman seeking the investigation of the President's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, for his supposed participation in the NBN deal.

In a statement, the Makati Business Club commended Neri for his "courageous testimony" but expressed regret at his decision to invoke executive privilege when asked what he and Ms Arroyo talked about in connection with the project.

"By implicating (Abalos) in an attempt to bribe him ... Chairman Neri placed his personal safety as well as his professional career at grave risk. However, we regret that he invoked executive privilege at a point in his testimony which prevented certain facts from being revealed," the MBC said.

It renewed its call for Abalos to resign "for bringing disgrace to his office" and said if Abalos ignored its appeal, "we call on Congress to impeach him."

The MBC also reiterated its appeal to Ms Arroyo to cancel the contract with ZTE.

Laylo sustains solid comeback

STANDINGS AFTER EIGHT ROUNDS: 6 points—Z. Pengxiang (China), Z. Jun (China); **5.5—D. Laylo (RP)**, W. Hao (China), Z. Jianchao (China), W. Yang (China), M. Al-Modiahki (Qatar), G. Gopal (India), D. Neelotpal (India), A. Kunte (India); **5—R. Antonio (RP)**, U. Adianto (Indonesia), L. Q. Liem (Vietnam); 4.5—C. Sandipan (India), L. Chao (China), C. Deepan (India), P. Negi (India), S. Yang (China); **4—M. Paragua (RP), O. Dimakiling (RP), J. Sadorra (RP), R. Bancod (RP)**, X. Jun (China), E. Moradiabadi (Iran), A. Bagheri (Iran), M. Mahjoobzardast (Iran), M. Ardeshi (Iran), W. Zhou (China), Y. Shaoteng (China), W. Rui (China), N.A. Dung (Vietnam); **3.5—E. Bagamasbad (RP)**, N.A. Hussein (Iraq), H. Toufighi (Iran), T.H. Thong (Vietnam), A. Samhouri (Jordan), D.D. Trong (Vietnam)

By Roy Luarca

D. LAYLO IM
A. ONISCHUK GM

DARWIN Laylo (left) continues his amazing comeback from a six-month suspension. PDI PHOTO

MANDAUE CITY—CHINESE Grandmasters Zhang Pengxian and Zhao Jun opted to play it safe Wednesday night, agreeing to quick draws and keeping their share of the lead in the Sixth Asian Individual Chess Championship here.

Zhang halved the point with Indian GM Das Neelotpal while Zhao split the point with countryman GM Wang Hao to raise their totals to 6.0 points after eight rounds at the Cebu International Convention Center.

Trailing the eight-seeded Zhao and the second-seeded Zhang, winner of the First President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo Cup last November, at 5.5 points were Filipino IM Darwin Laylo, Neelotpal, Wang, Qatari GM Mohamad Al-Modiahki, Indian GM G.N. Gopal, Chinese IM Wen Yang and Indian GM Abhijit Kunte.

Continuing his amazing comeback after serving a six-month suspension slapped by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines, Laylo beat rising Cebuano star Kim Steven Yap in 52 moves of an English Opening to lift the sagging Philippine campaign.

The 27-year-old Laylo, a Turin Olympian, was on the verge of promoting his f pawn when Yap, the two-time national Prisaa champion, resigned.

GM Rogelio "Joey" Antonio bounced back into contention by trashing Iranian International Master Morteza Mahjoobzardast in 55 moves of a Sicilian.

The 42-year-old Antonio, sidetracked by Chinese GM Wang Hao in the seventh round, improved to 5.0 points and boosted his bid for another stint at the chess World Cup slated in Russia in November.

Bunched with Antonio, the Philippines' highest scorer in the 2006 Turin Chess Olympiad, were Indonesian GM Utut Adianto and Chinese WGM Shen Yang, the lone female entry among 72 entries.

Kunte handed Yang her first defeat to gain ground on the pacesetters of the 17-nation, 11-round tournament.

The 16-year-old Shen, the reigning world junior girls' titlist who conquered Filipino GM Mark Paragua in the seventh round, stayed at 4.5 points.

Al-Modiahki bested Indian GM Chakkravarthy Deepan, Gopal downed Indian GM Chanda Sandipan while Wen stunned Indian GM Parimaran Negi.

IM Oliver Dimakiling drew with Chinese GM Xu Jun after 31 moves of a King's Indian Defense as both climbed to 4.0 points.

Other Filipino bets posted contrasting results with NM Hamed Nouri bowing to Vietnamese GM Nguyen Anh Dung and NM Mirabeau Maga downing Sri Lankan M.K. A. Russel.

Hamed remained at 3.0 points in the company of NM Emmanuel Senador and Anthony Makinano. Maga moved out of the cellar with 2.0 points.

Senador, a member of the Philippine team to the 2004 Chess Olympiad, beat compatriot Rustum Tolentino to match Makinano's victory over Stuat Fancy of Papua New Guinea.

Late seventh round matches saw Laylo and Yap hurdle higher rated rivals GM Dao Thien Hai and IM Wesley So.

Zhao trounced Indian GM Parimarjan Negi to join Zhang at the top with 5.5 points. The top 10 finishers after 11 rounds will represent the region in the biennial World Cup.

Lightnings clinch top UCAA spot

THE ASIAN COLLEGE OF SCIENCE and Technology (Acsat) Lightnings overcame a bad start and clobbered the Philippine School of Business Administration Jaguars, 101-70, to clinch the top Final Four slot in the Universities and Colleges Athletic Association (UCAA) men's basketball tournament at the Olivarez College Sports Center.

Chris Bularon led the Lightnings with 25 points, enabling Acsat to finish the eliminations with a 10-4 record.

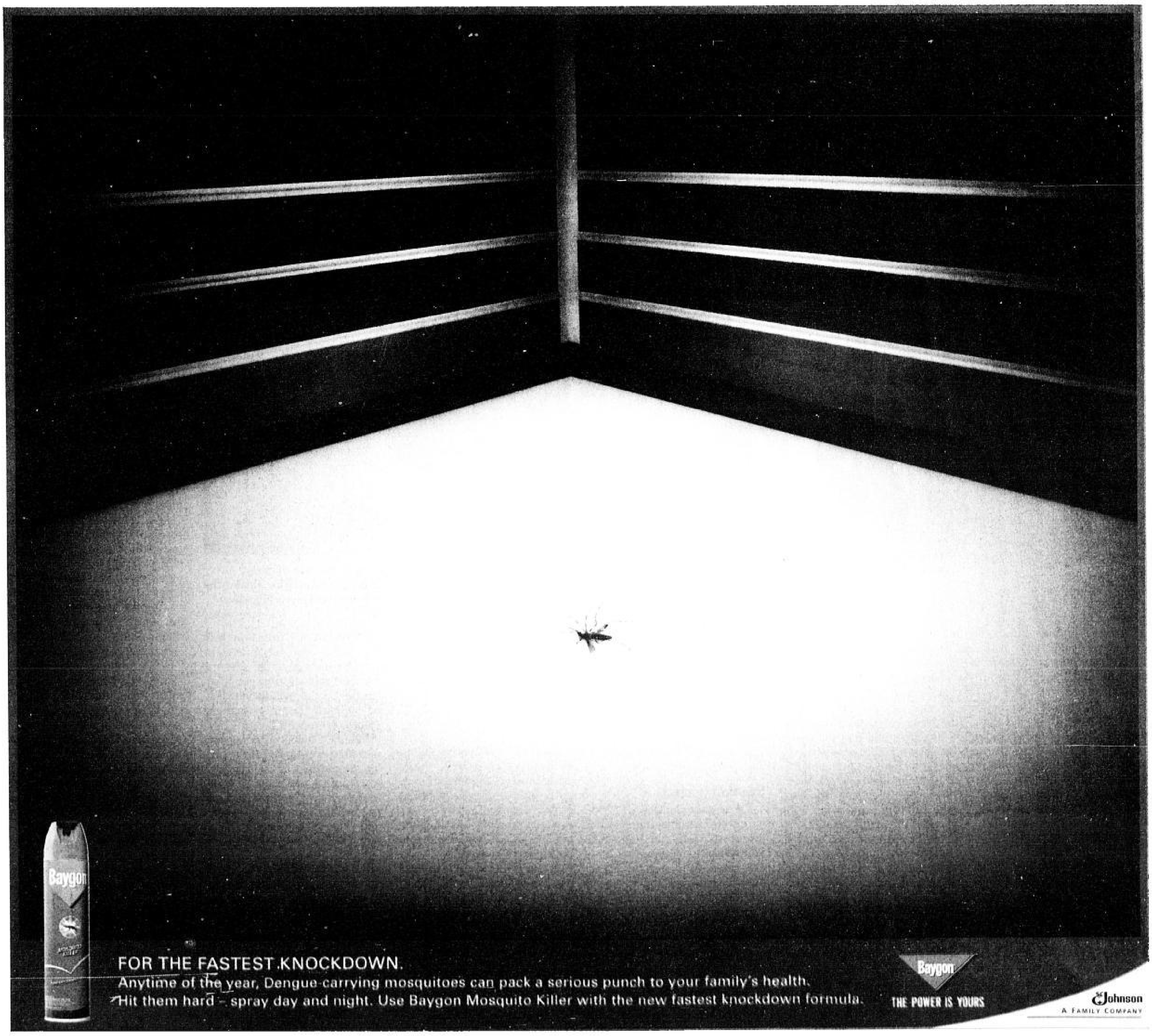
Their victory arrested a two-game slide by the Lightnings, who ended the Jaguars' semifinal aspirations and completed the Final Four cast.

The Las Piñas College Blue Lions emerging as the last qualifier.

The Blue Lions (9-5) formalized their entry into the Final Four, crushing the Universal College of Nursing Dragons, 81-58, with RJ Terez and Cameroon standout Ben Bikonte delivering 12 and 11 points, respectively.

The St. Francis of Assisi College Doves (9-4) and the defending champion Emilio Aguinaldo College Generals (9-4) are fighting to earn the second semis seat as of presstime.

"In our last in the elimination game, we just wanted to win convincingly so the boys can have a lot of confidence going into the Final Four," said Lightnings coach Ricky Alcantara.



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5 Metro areas under tight watch by police

Maximum security for barangay polls

By Kristine L. Alave

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION Office has identified five "areas of immediate concern" in Metro Manila before the synchronized barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections on Oct. 29.

Supt. Rhodel Sermonia, NCRPO spokesperson, said the police are closely monitoring depressed areas in Malabon City, Smokey Mountain, Tondo and Quiapo in Manila and Maharlika Village in Taguig City.

"We will have maximum police visibility and security in these areas during the election period," he told reporters yesterday at a media forum in San Juan City.

Sermonia said these areas have been placed under close monitoring due to past incidents of violence and reports about the presence of lawless elements. He added that they would soon evaluate the security situation in these communities to determine if there is a need to place them under the supervision of the Commission on Elections.

The NCRPO earlier warned the Metro police chiefs to be on guard even weeks before next month's elections to monitor the presence of groups that may take advantage of the situation.

"Various threat groups are expected to take advantage of the election for financial gain as well as to advance their organizational agenda by supporting their candidates," the NCRPO said.

"We will deploy teams to areas that need to beef up their security forces to"ensure orderly and peaceful elections," Sermonia said.

He added that they would also coordinate with local government units to ensure that all election security measures would be efficiently implemented.

The Philippine National Police will implement the nationwide ban imposed by the Comelec starting Sept. 29 until Nov. 13. During the period, all permits to carry firearms outside of homes are suspended unless the holder has a written permission from the Comelec.

Tullahan Bridge repair work over by Saturday; open to traffic Oct. 15

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE Tullahan Bridge in Valenzuela City will finally be completed this Saturday, according to Assistant Director Angelito Twano of the DPWH National Capital Region.

However, the bridge will be open to vehicular traffic on Oct. 15 because the department needs 15 days to build the approaches to both ends of the structure, he added.

The project was originally set to be completed last June but was delayed because of allegations that it was overpriced and the work was being undertaken by a contractor who had been blacklisted.

Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla, head of the Senate committee on public works who made the allegations even called for the dismissal of the Tullahan project director, Director Josefino Rigor of the DPWH-NCR.

Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. answered these accusations by explaining that the target date of completion was moved from June to September because of the May 14 elections.

"Local executives requested that the project be stopped until after the elections," Ebdane pointed out.

He likewise denied allegations that the DPWH hired a "blacklisted contractor" for the project and that the price was padded by some P2.5 million.

There was no irregularity in the awarding of the P63 million project contract to RC Ramos Construction Co., Ebdane said.

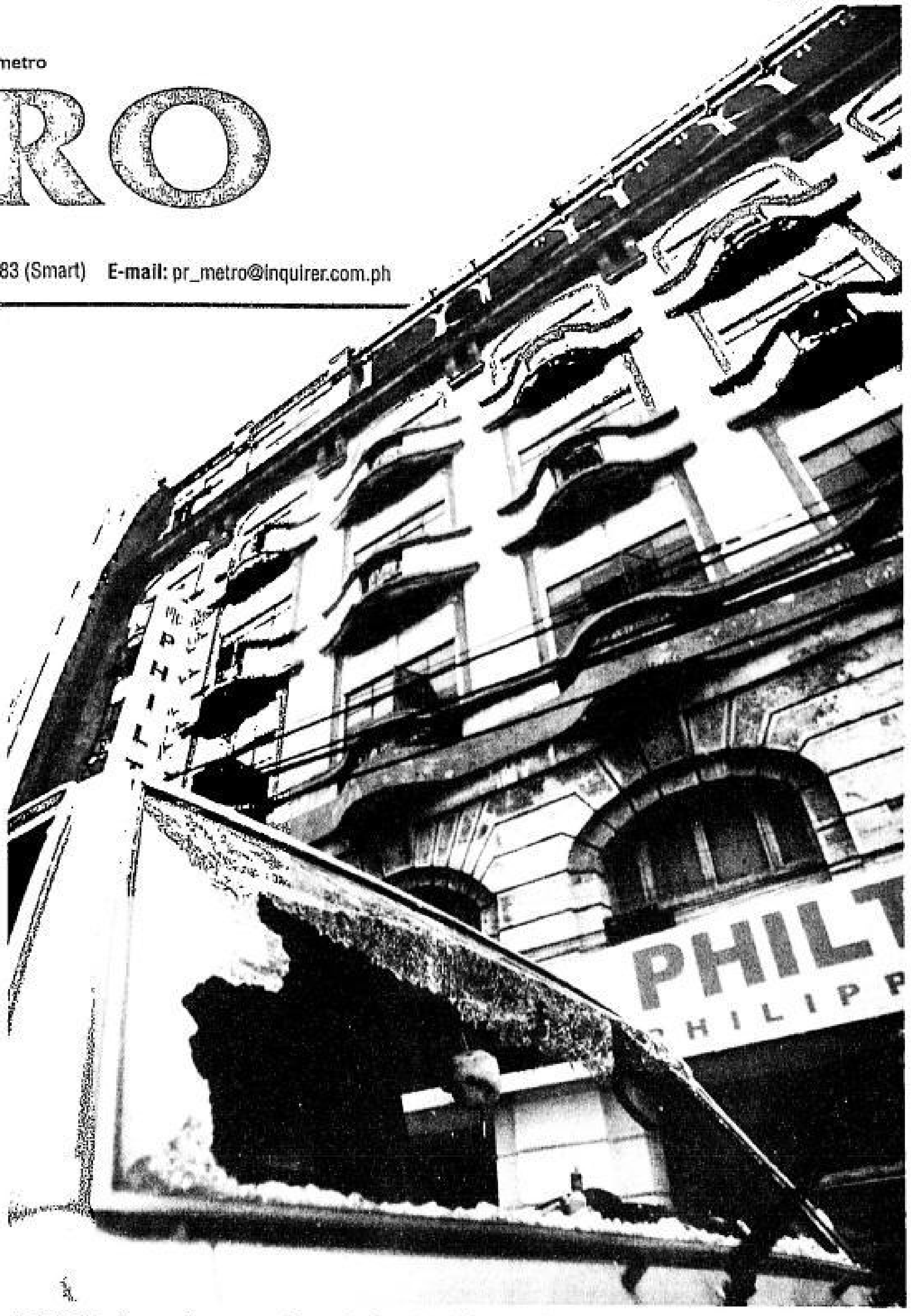
The project involves the total reconstruction and elevation of the bridge to prevent water from the Tullahan River from flooding the structure during the rainy season.

DID YOU KNOW

KALENTONG Street in Mandaluyong City was named after the nom de guerre of Vicente Leyva, one of the heroes of the revolution against Spanish rule.

Also named in honor of Leyva, a native of Barangka, Mandaluyong, is the highest award given by the city to individuals and groups with significant contributions to society: The Order of General Kalentong Award.

Cyril L. Bonabente,
Inquirer Research



FALLING pieces of concrete from the facade of the condemned Philtrust building in Binondo, Manila, shattered the windshield of a van, one of eight vehicles damaged in the incident yesterday.

REM ZAMORA

Binondo building facade crumbles; 8 cars damaged

By Tina G. Santos

PARTS OF THE FACADE OF AN ABANDONED building in Binondo, Manila, crumbled yesterday and fell on at least eight vehicles which were parked nearby.

Of the eight vehicles, three were destroyed while the rest sustained some damage.

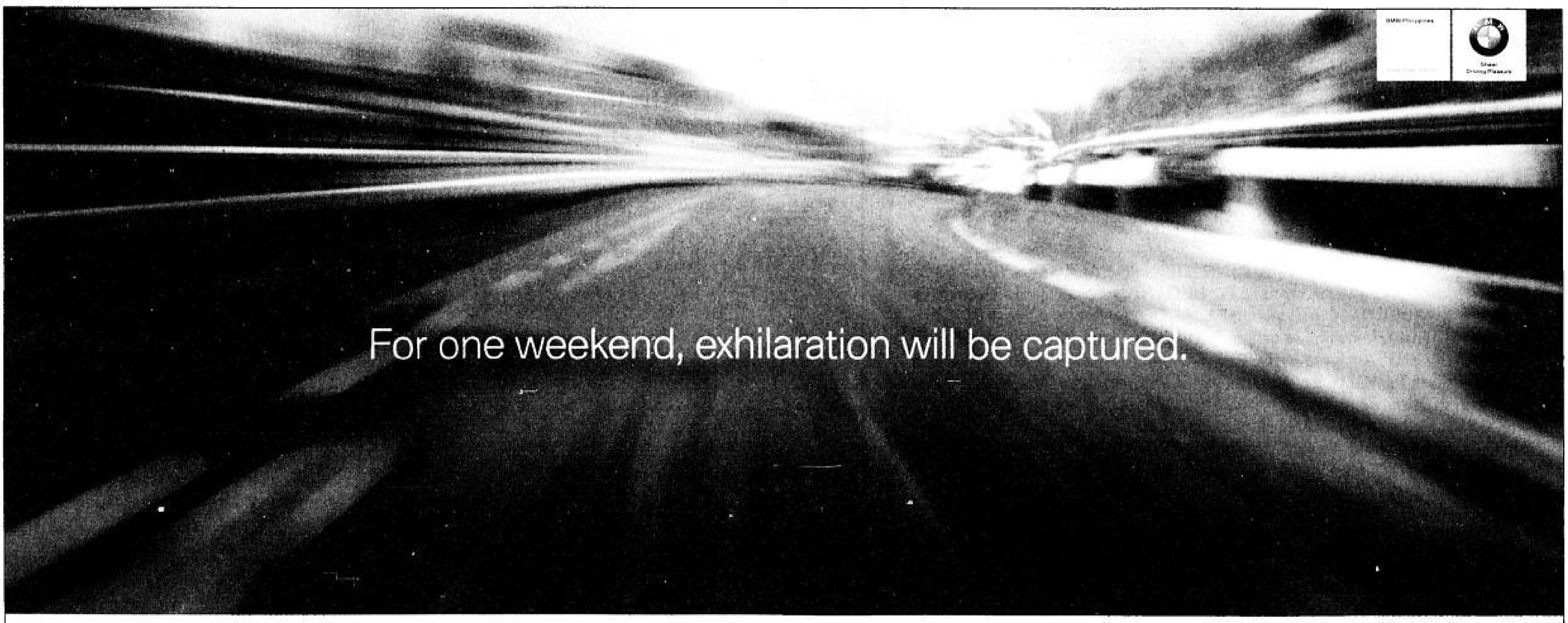
There were no injuries or fatalities reported.

Police said the debris came from the eight-story Philtrust building on Quintin Paredes and Cervantes Streets that had been condemned and ordered demolished.

The City Council of Manila earlier passed a resolution seeking to tear down all condemned buildings and infrastructures in the city.

Councilor Lourdes Isip-Garcia, chair of the committee on housing and urban development and resettlement, had voiced her concern about the fact that the city has many condemned buildings that remain standing.

"There have been a lot of notices (for demolition) sent out but I have yet to see actual demolition take place," Garcia said. "These structures are dangerous to the public. They might collapse anytime, might harm or kill people and cause damage to other properties," she said, adding that condemned buildings "attract the homeless and curious little children, particularly street kids."



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Controversial NBN project was Victor Corpus' idea

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

AS CHARGES AND COUNTER-charges are being hurled in the Senate and in the media about the National Broadband Network (NBN) project, retired Brig. Gen. Victor Corpus must be shaking his head over the outcome of what he calls a "noble project."

You see, the broadband network project, as well as the cyber education or distance-learning program of the Department of Education, was Corpus' idea.

Both the NBN and the distance-learning project are now both on hold upon orders of President Gloria.

The Supreme Court earlier issued an order temporarily suspending the implementation of the NBN project.

Actually, what Corpus, former chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), wanted was just a single cyberspace project.

The wise guys in the Arroyo administration, however, broke it down into two—the NBN project and the cyber education or distance-learning program.

When the President's men adopted Corpus' idea, they didn't have the courtesy of giving him credit for it.

As early as 2001, Corpus gave this writer, his adopted classmate (Philippine Military Academy Class 1967), his idea was to make quality education accessible to barrio folks through computer-based learning with the use of satellite facilities.

I didn't pay attention to what he told me then because I'm a complete computer illiterate.

E-commerce, e-learning, e-mail—whatever—are beyond my comprehension. I'm a dog that can't be taught new tricks.

When I called him yesterday and reminded him about his idea, which is now the talk of the town, he said: "Mon, the project is very noble. They just destroyed it."

Vic Corpus, who was incapable of the shenanigans now being exposed in the Senate when he was still in the service, lives a very simple life.

When one leg of his old dining table gave way, he repaired it himself instead of just buying a new dining set.

As military general, he could have had one of his soldiers repair the dining table, or he could afford to buy one.

Why did Corpus arrive at the idea of giving the barrio folk quality education through long-distance learning via satellite?

Because he believes that educating the poor would liberate them from ignorance that the New People's Army (NPA) is exploiting.

Poverty, Corpus said, is the result of ignorance.

Poverty drives many poor people to support or join the NPA because they feel that government is indifferent to their condition.

Of course, Corpus knows whereof he speaks because he once defected to the NPA out of frustration over the government's apathy towards the poor and oppressed.

Corpus hopes that the government continues the broadband network and distance learning projects without the attendant issues of corruption.

If only President Gloria didn't let go of Corpus to side with her favorite Cabinet member with whom Vic had a tiff, the current Senate investigation into the NBN project, and the flak it has generated, would not be taking place today.

Missing nanny to face kidnapping charges, says NBI

By Tina G. Santos

KIDNAPPING CHARGES WILL BE filed by the National Bureau of Investigation in the Pasig City Prosecutor's Office next week against Marites Ontog, the nanny of Geraldine Palma, the 7-year-old girl who is believed to have been kidnapped, raped and killed by her abductors.

"We will file the case based on the claim of Palma's father, Gerald, that his daughter was taken without his consent," Arnel Dalumpines, chief of the NBI Special Task Force told reporters yesterday. The agency is conducting its own investigation of the case.

Meanwhile, the parents of Jessalyn Salvatierra, the 12-year-old girl from Tondo who disappeared at about the same time as Palma, are expected to give DNA samples at the NBI today. The samples will be compared with those taken from the body of the girl—believed to be Palma—which they exhumed last Monday.

Palma, a 7-year-old student of St. Paul College, disappeared with Ontog, her nanny, last month. A few days after she was reported missing, the body of a girl stuffed inside a suitcase was found in Tondo, Manila.

The body was believed to be that of Palma after her parents, Gerald and Felma, came forward and identified her as their daughter. The body was exhumed Monday after the police raised doubts that it was Palma's.

Salvatierra, on the other hand, was last seen on Aug. 12—at about the same time Palma disappeared.

The girl apparently failed to come home after she was seen riding a pedicab from her school, police said.

Yesterday, Salvatierra's mother, Julieta, went to the NBI for fingerprinting. Julieta also turned over her daughter's belongings, including books and toys, for possible lifting of latent fingerprints.

Chief Insp. Alejandro Yanquiling, head of the Manila Police District homicide division, said they were able to secure Salvatierra's dental records at the Manuel L. Quezon Elementary School, where she was a grade six student. But the available records were taken when she was 8 years old, Yanquiling said.

Dalumpines added that they would call in a dentist who allegedly conducted tooth extraction procedures on Salvatierra last year.

4 get life terms for drug possession

By Allison W. Lopez

THREE WOMEN AND A MAN WERE sentenced to life imprisonment by a Manila court yesterday after they were found guilty of possessing more than 500 grams of the illegal drug "shabu." The four were also ordered to pay a total of P1.7 million in penalties.

Convicted for violation of Sec. 11 RA 9165 (illegal possession of dangerous drugs) were Pakungan Talib, Asna Gugo, Aga Ulong and Danny Ulong, who were arrested during a routine check by Manila police in Quiapo in 2004.

Judge Carmelita Manahan of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 16 gave weight to the testimonies of five policemen who testified for the prosecution—Insp. Jose Asayo, SPO1 Porfirio Divina, SPO1 Manuel Aceveda, PO2 Vicente Baquiran and PO3 Jordan Villanueva—for being "straightforward, consistent and credible in all material points."

For the defense, two barangay officers collaborated the testimonies of the accused that the arrest was made not in Quiapo but in Sampaloc. The accused also claimed the police did not have search warrants but asked them to shell out P3 million for their release, which they were unable to produce.

The court, however, junked their defense and cited the "presumption of regularity in the performance of police officers' duty."

Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

ANNOUNCEMENT

The JBC announces that the following are applicants for different judgeship positions:

REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (RTC): (REGION I) ***SAN FERNANDO, LA UNION, Br.66:*** **ACOSTA**, Benedicto Jr. M.; **AQUINO**, Manuel R.; **BALLOQUING**, Marita B.; **BERNARDO**, Elmer R.; **BORJA**, Crispo Jr. Q.; **CABALTERA**, Froilan D.; **CASTILLO**, Virgilita B.; **CONCEPCION**, Victor O.; **CORPUZ**, Carlito A.; **CORTEZ**, Reynaldo A.; **DIZON**, Medwin S.; **DIZON**, Rodolfo B.; **FANGAYEN**, Robert P.; **FERNANDEZ**, Nolasco Jr. M.; **GUZMAN**, Mayflor H.; **LACANSANDILE**, Reynaldo A.; **LIM**, Maximo B.; **MALIAMAN**, Maryfrances F.; **QUINIT**, Mario O.; **REYES**, Alfonso Basil A.; **TOBIA**, Robert H.; **(REGION VI)** ***BALAYAN, BATANGAS Br.9:*** **ACOSTA**, Benedicto Jr. M.; **CALONGE**, Diosdado V.; **CAMPANILLA**, Marlo B.; **CASTILLO**, Renato M.; **CHUA**, Marifi P.; **DE JESUS**, Carolina F.; **DELA PEÑA**, Iluminado M.; **DIZON**, Rodolfo B.; **HIDALGO**, Maria Janina J.; **LIM**, Maximo B.; **LINDOG**, Mercedes D.; **LINDOG**, Noel M.; **LLADOC**, Victor P.; **MIARAL**, Ismael G.; **OLIVA**, Ferdinand S.; **SALUMBIDES**, Manuel G.; **SILANG**, Rolando E.; **TENORIO**, Buenaventura Albert J.; **TOBIA**, Robert H.; **VILLALUZ**, Roland C.; **(REGION XI)** ***TAGUM CITY, DAVAO DEL NORTE Br.1:*** **ANG**, Virginia T.; **CABREROS**, Socorro E.; **DORADO**, Castor B.; **ELMAN**, Rodolfo M.; **ESPERO**, Carlos II L.; **LOPEZ**, Francisco Jr. H.; **SILVOSA**, Joselito M.; **TANJILI**, Ridway M.; **ZAMORA**, Juan R.;

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT (MTC): (REGION III) ***BALAGTAS, BULACAN:*** **AGAMA**, Marlyn M.; **AMOS**, Marissa D.; **BEDAÑA**, Gina A.; **DEL ROSARIO**, Rodrigo I.; **ESGUERRA**, Carolina DJ.; **FAJARDO**, Alejandro Jr. D.; **FELICEN**, Asteria B.; **GARCIA**, Anna Ma. Angela V.; **HIDALGO**, Maria Janina J.; **HIPOLITO**, Rosalia I.; **LAGROSA**, Myrna S.; **LOPEZ**, Alexandro C.; **MALLARI**, Maricel G.; **MAS**, Ana Marie T.; **MOZO**, Esther B.; **NOBLEJAS**, Arturo V.; **OSORIO**, Vicente Marcelo S.; **PERUCHO**, Zenaida D.; **PILARES**, Teresa E.;**PINOY**, Ma. Fe Carolyn G.; **ROJO**, Ira Fritzie C.; **ROMANO**, Ireneo A.; **TALAPIAN**, Hamlin Z.; **TORRIJOS**, Ronald Q.; **(REGION IV)** ***IMUS, CAVITE:*** **AMOS**, Marissa D.; **AREVALO**, Maria Rowena M.; **BAYOT**, Rudolph D.; **BEDAÑA**, Gina A.; **CAMPANILLA**, Marlo B.; **DUQUE**, Rosemarie P.; **ESGUERRA**, Carolina DJ; **FAJARDO**, Alejandro Jr. D.; **GELUZ**, Emily R.; **GINGOYON**, Adeliza M.; **GITO**, Emily SG.; **HERNANDEZ**, Joanne G.; **HIDALGO**, Maria Janina J.; **LANDAYAN**, Jose A.; **LLUZ**, Leopoldo C.; **MANGUIAT**, Fatima D.; **MARANAN**, Mary Jane V.; **MARCOS**, Dante Angel C.; **MARIANO**, Orlando G.; **MAS**, Ana Marie T.; **MONTESA**, Rainelda E.; **OGAD**, Carmen DJ.; **PAMINTUAN**, Ricardo T.; **PAMITTAN**, Mary Jean C.; **PANOPIO**, Zendy V.; **PARCO**, Peter Z.; **PINOY**, Ma. Fe Carolyn G.; **RIVERA**, Emmanuel L.; **ROJO**, Ira Fritzie C.; **VELAZCO**, Jose Jr. M.; **VICTA**, Liza DL.;

MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURT (MCTC): (REGION I) ***TAYUG-SAN NICOLAS, PANGASINAN:*** **AMOS**, Marissa D.; **ASUNCION**, Stella Marie G.; **FLORES**, Cristeta C.; **NGIPOL**, Valdo Boyd T.; **ORPILLA**, Arleen R.; **PERALTA**, Nimia C.; **ROJO**, Ira Fritzie C.; **PANINGBATAN**, Alejandra P.;

The public may submit sworn complaint, written report, or opposition against any of the aforesaid applicants not later than 08 October 2007 to the JBC Secretariat, 2nd Flr. Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Manila (Tel.No.552-9512; Fax No.552-9598; e-mail address jbc_supremecourt@yahoo.com.ph).

All applicants for judicial positions must submit to the JBC within ten days via fax, mail or e-mail their updated JBC Form 1 Revised September 2007 (downloadable from the JBC Website http.// jbc.supremecourt.gov.ph) and proof of Filipino citizenship.

26 September 2007.

MDVillarama
MA. LUISA D. VILLARAMA
Clerk of Court & JBC
Ex Officio Secretary

(PDI—September 27, 2007)

Major waterways, food firms top targets of MMDA intensified flood control efforts

By Kristine L. Alave

THE METROPOLITAN MANILA Development Authority (MMDA) is working double time cleaning up major waterways and avenues in the city in anticipation of more rains in the coming months because of the La Niña phenomenon.

In a forum yesterday at Club Filipino, MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday said the agency is intensifying its cleanup efforts, and appealed to food companies, fast food firms and restaurants to dispose of their waste properly.

He identified as priority cleanup areas the Antipolo City drainage, the Blumentrit, Sunog Apog and the Dimasalang creeks in Manila and the Parañaque and San Juan Rivers as well as the Tullahan River in Valenzuela City.

The MMDA is also expected to boost its flood control operation after Malacañang doubled the agency's budget for flood control from P101 million this year to P256 million for 2008, the chair said.

Fernando also issued a warning to restaurants and fast food firms who do not dispose of their garbage properly, especially their grease waste.

Food firms were told to place "grease traps" in their drainage systems to prevent oil and fatty ingredients from entering the waterways.

IAEB No 2007-022

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID (IAEB)

The Department of Tourism (DOT) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites Phil-GEPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and shortlisting and if found eligible and shortlisted, to bid for the hereunder project.

Name of Project	Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) for Boracay Island
Brief Description	Formulation of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) for Boracay Island
Approved Budget for the Contract	P 5 Million (inclusive of VAT and other taxes)
Contract Duration	Four (4) months

Eligibility of prospective bidders shall be checked using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Shortlisting of eligible suppliers will be done based on the following criteria. (a) applicable experience, (b) qualification of personnel who may be assigned to the job and, (c) current workload relative to capacity. Only 5 eligible bidders shall make up the shortlist. The evaluation procedure to be adopted shall be Quality-Based Evaluation (QBE).

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of activities is as follows:

Activities	*Schedule*
1 Submission of Letter of Intent (LOI)	01 October 2007 (8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.) 3rd Flr. Rm. 314, DOT Bldg T.M. Kalaw St. Ermita, Manila
2. Issuance of Eligibility Requirements Checklist & Sample Forms	Upon submission of Letter of Intent (LOI), 3rd Flr. Rm. 314, DOT Bldg T.M. Kalaw St. Ermita, Manila
3. Submission of Eligibility Requirements	Until 1:00 p.m. only, 8 October 2007 3rd Flr. Rm. 314, DOT Bldg. T.M. Kalaw St. Ermita, Manila
4. Checking of Eligibility Requirements	08 October 2007 (2:00 p.m.) DOT Training Room, Rm. 202 T.M. Kalaw St. Ermita, Manila
5. Results of Shortlisting of Eligible Bidders	15 October 2007
6. Issuance of Bid Documents	16 October 2007 (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. only) 3rd Flr. Rm. 314, DOT Bldg. T.M. Kalaw St. Ermita, Manila
7 Pre-bid Conference and Briefing w/ Shortlisted Eligible Bidders	18 October 2007 (2:00 p.m.) DOT Training Room, Rm. 202 T.M. Kalaw St. Ermita, Manila
8. Submission of Technical and Financial Proposals	Until 1:00 p.m. only, 30 October 2007 3rd Flr. Rm. 314, DOT Bldg T.M. Kalaw St. Ermita, Manila
9. Opening of Bids (Checking for completeness of Technical Requirements/Proposals)	30 October 2007 (2:00 p.m.) DOT Training Room, Rm. 202 T.M. Kalaw St. Ermita, Manila

The Eligibility Requirements Checklist/ Sample Forms will be available at the BAC Secretariat c/o Florencio Capati, 3rd Floor Room 314, DOT Bldg T.M. Kalaw St. Ermita, Manila (tel. nos. 524-1660 and 524-1742) upon submission of a letter of intent. Submission of Eligibility Requirements in sealed envelopes shall be on the same office.

Bid Documents will be available only to shortlisted eligible bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 5,000.00 to the cashier. Bids shall be submitted in sealed envelopes addressed to the BAC Chairman.

The Department of Tourism reserves the right to reject any or all bids, declare a Failure of Bidding at any time prior to the contract award, or not to award the contract, without thereby incurring any liability, and make no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of the bidding. Likewise, the Department of Tourism may waive any minor defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the government. Further, the Department of Tourism assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) Usec. OSCAR P. PALABYAB
BAC Chairman

(PDI - Sept. 27, 2007)

METROBRIEFS

Jealous man kills live-in partner

A 20-YEAR-OLD woman died yesterday morning at the hospital, a day after she was allegedly shot by her live-in partner in Barangay Sta. Monica, Novaliches, Quezon City. Carol Nator was shot in the face on Tuesday night by a man identified only by the police as "Ayudin" after she told him that she was leaving him. The police said the victim wanted to end her relationship with the suspect because he was too possessive and would get jealous every time she talked to another man. Case investigator SP01 Eduardo Samilin said the victim was in her house when the suspect arrived, shot her and then fled. Neighbors rushed Nator to the hospital where she died yesterday morning.

Kenneth M. del Rosario

Boy on bike dead in mishap

A TEENAGER riding his bicycle on Edsa Extension near the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City the other day was killed after a van hit him. Jerome Tandungan, 16, suffered multiple injuries and was declared dead on arrival at the hospital. Rolando Fernandez, the driver of the Ford Everest that hit the boy's bike, surrendered to traffic enforcers after the incident. Case investigator SPO2 Pete Sabuco said Fernandez was driving on the southbound lane of the Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard on Tuesday afternoon when he hit the boy. The driver said he was surprised to see the victim on his bike. "He claimed he did not notice the boy," Sabuco said. Traffic enforcers are preparing charges of reckless imprudence resulting in homicide against Fernandez.

Julie M. Aurelio

Man convicted of murder

THE MAN charged with killing a social welfare coordinator while distributing relief goods in Tondo in 2004 was found guilty of murder by a Manila court yesterday. Judge Vedasto Marco of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 41 sentenced Nestor Angolong Caures to life imprisonment for shooting to death social welfare barangay coordinator Ma. Aledia "Mary" Gilbuena who was distributing relief goods at the Baseco Compound. The court said it gave credence to the testimonies of two witnesses who identified Caures as the one who shot Gilbuena dead. The police said the suspect apparently mistook the victim for someone else.

Allison W. Lopez

US House tightens nuclear sanctions on Iran

WASHINGTON—THE US HOUSE of Representatives aimed a sharp jab at Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Tuesday, slapping new energy sanctions on Tehran, and branding its Revolutionary Guard a terrorist group.

A measure targeting the elite military corps and the lucrative Iranian energy sector sailed through the House by 397 votes to 16, hours before Ahmadinejad's speech to the United Nations General Assembly.

The legislation is aimed at depriving Iran of proceeds from energy sales which could be diverted into funding its nuclear program, which the West says is intended to produce atomic weapons, a charge Tehran denies.

Its top sponsor, veteran Democratic chair of the House Foreign Affairs committee, Tom Lantos, said the bill was needed because Iran's denials of a nuclear weapons program could not be believed.

"I wish that we could take Ahmadinejad at his word, but we obviously cannot," Lantos said.

"This is the same man who yesterday said, 'Our people are the freest in the world, and there are no homosexuals in Iran.'"

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, the committee's top Republican, added: "Too many foreign energy firms have become functional allies in Tehran's efforts to build a nuclear bomb."

The bill sanctions foreign companies with US subsidiaries which invest in Iran, particularly in the oil and gas sectors.

It also prohibits civilian nuclear cooperation with nations that support Iran's nuclear program and calls on the US government to urge foreign states and banks to divest from Iranian interests.

The bill passed as six key world powers working to curb Iran's nuclear activities scheduled new talks on imposing new sanctions against the Islamic state.

It also calls on the State Department to designate the Islamic Revolutionary Guard as a "foreign terrorist organization" and therefore open the corps and affiliated companies to economic sanctions.

US military officials and lawmakers have accused the Guards of arming Shiite militias in Iraq, and supplying sophisticated roadside bombs that kill US soldiers in the war-torn nation.

The Bush administration said in August it would designate all or part of the Guards as a terrorist organization.

Iran has already been on the US government state sponsors of terrorism blacklist for more than two decades.

The Senate was expected to vote on a bill as early as Tuesday also calling for the Guards to be blacklisted as a terrorist group.

The House bill, named the Iran Counterproliferation Act, takes away the often used power of the US president to waive sanctions against giant global oil firms which do business in the Iranian energy sector.

It also bars Iranian imports into the United States.

Already this year, the US government has escalated financial sanctions against Iran.

The US Treasury and other government agencies have blacklisted and applied asset freezes against at least 15 Iranian entities.

Most, including the Atomic Energy Organization and the Mesbah Energy Company, operate in the nuclear, energy and industrial industries.

Iran's banking sector is also in Washington's sights, as well as Iranian groups it says fund "terrorist" organizations such as Hezbollah, the Lebanese-based Shiite political and militant group.

The Treasury blacklisted Iran's fifth-largest state-owned bank, Bank Sepah, in January, claiming it had funded weapons proliferation, including a Chinese firm's sale of "missile-related items" to Iran in 2005.

In July, the House passed a bill requiring the naming of foreign companies with more than $20 million in Iran's energy sector, paving the way for US federal and state pension funds to divest from such firms.

The Guards is fiercely committed to defending the ideals of Iran's revolutionary founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Ahmadinejad fought for the Guards during the 1980-1988 war with Iraq. *AFP*

US to examine legality of lethal injections

WASHINGTON—IN A MOVE which could slow the rate of US executions, the Supreme Court agreed on Tuesday to consider the constitutionality of lethal injections used in almost all the country's death penalty cases.

Amid growing controversy over exactly how lethal injections are administered, the court said it would examine the cases of two men condemned to death in the Southern state of Kentucky.

"It affects virtually everyone on death row," said Richard Dieter, director of the Death Penalty Information Center, who stressed, however, that the court is unlikely to end capital punishment.

"It may be all about a slowdown," he said. "For the next six months or so, we may have executions on hold."

But despite the announcement, authorities in Texas said they planned to go ahead and administer a lethal injection later Tuesday to Michael Richard, 48, sentenced to death for raping and killing a mother of seven children in 1986.

"The execution is still scheduled," Krista Moody, a spokesperson for Texas governor Rick Perry, told AFP.

"Some countries may hesitate to execute right now, but we're not a country where departments of corrections wait unless they have to." Rights activists argue that lethal injections are often slow and painful and contradict the constitution's ban on "cruel and unusual punishment."

So far this year, 40 of the 41 people executed in the country have been killed by lethal injection, with one choosing the electric chair. In 2006, there were 53 executions in the United States, all but one through lethal injection.

During an execution, three drugs are administered to the condemned person: one to sedate him, one to paralyze him, and one to stop the heart.

However, there is no national protocol for administering the drugs and it is not always done by a medical professional. While the prisoner may appear calm, several studies and botched executions have shown that death may in fact be prolonged and quite painful.

A 2005 study showed only small amounts of sedatives in the bodies of the condemned, leaving open the possibility that they were awake when the other two medications were injected.

In Florida in December, Angel Nieves Diaz, his eyes wide open, grimaced and shook for more than 30 minutes before finally suffering convulsions and dying.

Authorities later found that the needles were inserted too far and the lethal cocktail was injected outside his veins. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Thai minister resigns

BANGKOK—A senior Thai minister announced his resignation on Wednesday because of conflict of interest, after it was revealed his ministry bought goods from a company in which he holds shares. Interior Minister Aree Wongsearaya was the third senior official to quit within a week, after the Counter Corruption Commission said they held more than 5 percent of shares in a private company, which is banned by the Thai Constitution. Aree acknowledged that his ministry had bought 6 million baht ($188,000) worth of canned fish from a company which he part-owned, but denied he did anything wrong. **AP**

Car bomb kills 5 in Iraq

MOSUL—A suicide car bomber killed five people and wounded nine in an attack targeting a tribal leader near the town of Sinjar in northwest Iraq on Wednesday, local officials said. Sinjar Mayor Dakheel Hassu said the bomber blew his car up in a reception area where Sheikh Kanan al-Juhaimur regularly hosted guests outside his house in the village of Um el-Zaidan. Police said Juhaimur was wounded in the attack but Hassu said he had no details on the tribal leader's fate. **Reuters**

Thaksin's trial suspended

BANGKOK—Thailand's Supreme Court suspended a corruption trial of fugitive deposed Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra on Tuesday until authorities can bring him to court, officials said, as Thaksin claimed his innocence. Thaksin and his wife Pojamarn failed to appear in court on Tuesday for the first hearing of the trial in connection with her purchase of a prime piece of Bangkok real estate in 2003, when Thaksin was prime minister. "The law prohibits prosecution of the case without the defendants being present, so the court has ordered the trial suspended until officials can bring the defendants to court," said Thonglor Chomngang, chief of the nine judges hearing the case. **AP**

New Zealand volcano erupts

WELLINGTON—Ski lodges were evacuated, highways briefly shut down and one man badly injured when a volcano in New Zealand erupted unexpectedly, spewing ash and rocks into the air, officials said on Wednesday. The eruption at Mount Ruapehu, located halfway between Wellington and Auckland on New Zealand's North Island, started at 8:23 p.m. on Tuesday and lasted for seven minutes, volcanologist Craig Miller said. "It was just straight out of the blue," Miller told Radio New Zealand. No further activity was reported in the hours following the eruption. **AFP**

Bhutto to take on Musharraf

WASHINGTON—Pakistani ex-Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, vowing to restore democracy and combat extremism, said on Tuesday her party would field a presidential candidate against General Pervez Musharraf. Bhutto said that under President Musharraf, Pakistan had become "the petri dish of the international extremist movement" and that only a new government with broad support could root out Islamic militancy. **AFP**

Philippine Science High School-Western Visayas
Lawaan H. Lopez Campus
Tel. No. (033) 3295644/(033)3292011

Contract Number Reference
Name of the Contract: Completion of Multi Purpose Gym
Location of the Contract: Bgy. Bitoon, Jaro, Iloilo City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Science High School-Western Visayas, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract	Completion of Multi Purpose Gym
Location	PSHSWV, Bgy. Bitoon, Jaro, Iloilo City
Brief Description	Furnishing of labor, materials, tools, equipment and other incidentals for the repair and completion of Multi Purpose Gym
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	P8,586,900.00
Contract Duration	Five (5) months

Prospective bidders (at least Medium A) should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use a non discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. Prospective bidders should pass eligibility requirements including GEPS Registration. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

	BAC ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1.	Advertisement/Posting	September 27 - October 04, 2007
2.	Receipt of Letter of Intent and Issuance of Eligibility Requirements	October 05-11, 2007
3.	Deadline for Submission of Eligibility Requirements	October 12, 2007
4.	Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	October 16, 2007
5.	Issuance of Bid Documents to Eligible Contractors	October 18, 2007
6.	Pre-bid conference	October 25, 2007 (1:30 PM)
7.	Receipt and Opening of Bids	November 08, 2007 (1:30 PM)

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at PSHSWV-BAC Secretariat Office at Bgy. Bitoon, Jaro, Iloilo City, upon their submission of LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,000.00 to the PSHSWV Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address with telephone numbers (033) 3295644 and (033) 3292011.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P4,500.00 to the PSHSWV Cashier.

The PSHSWV reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to declare a failure of bidding, or not to award and assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

(Sgd.) EDGAR F. ALMERO, Ed.D.
BAC Chairman

(PDI - Sept. 27, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Center for Health Development - Central Visayas
Osmeña Blvd., Cebu City

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to RE-BID

Name of Project: Procurement of Laboratory Fixtures and Office Equipment for DOH-BFAD Satellite Laboratory at Mandaue City – (RE-BIDDING)

1. The *DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - CENTRAL VISAYAS (DOH-CV)*, through the *Equipment Outlay Funds for CY 2006* intends to apply the sum *(please see schedule under no. 2)* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contracts as listed below. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *DOH-CV* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the following:

LOT	CLASSIFICATION	APPROVED BUDGET FOR the CONTRACT (PhP)	COST OF BID DOCUMENTS (PhP)	DELIVERY PERIOD (Days)
I	Office Equipment	182,500.00	200.00	15
II	Air Conditioning Equipment	901,000.00	600.00	15
III	I.T. Equipment, Parts, Accessories and Peripherals	465,000.00	300.00	30
V	Services *(Installation of Vertical Blinds and Glass Tint)*	148,200.00	100.00	30
VI	Metal Fabrication	104,250.00	100.00	30
VIII	Fixtures Group B	1,570,345.00	1,300.00	60

The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who shall be determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from *DOH-CV* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *10.00 am to 12.00 nn and 1.00 pm to 2:30 pm.*
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount *as stated in item no. 2 hereof.* The method of payment will be *in cash.* The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. *Since this is a re-bidding* the DOH-CV will not hold a Pre-Bid Conference. However, the BAC may conduct one if requested by the bidders.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements *must* be delivered to the address below on or before *the Bidding Schedule (as stated in item no. 8 below) at Tugas Conference Room, DOH-CV, Osmeña Blvd., Cebu City.* All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of *cash, cashier's check, manager's check or GSIS surety bond* and in the amount as indicated in the bid documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be at *Tugas Conference Room, DOH-CV, Osmeña Blvd., Cebu City on 16 October 2007 at the following schedule:*

LOT NOs.	Bidding Schedule, Time
Lots I, II, V	9:30 am, 16 October 2007
Lots III, VI, VIII	2:00 pm, 16 October 2007

Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders or their representatives who choose to attend.

9. The *DOH-CV* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - CENTRAL VISAYAS
Mrs. Elizabeth Tabasa – BAC Secretariat Chairperson
Osmeña Blvd., Cebu City
(032) 253-6359 Telephone
miggerson@yahoo.com
(032) 253-3419 Telefax
www.chd7.doh.gov.ph

(Sgd.) ENGR. MIGUEL T. GERSON
BAC Chairman

(PDI—September 27, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Citizenship	Position
ZTE PHILIPPINES, INC. 25/F Pacific Star Bldg., Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City	Feng Tian Chinese	Senior Sales Director
ZTE PHILIPPINES, INC. 25/F Pacific Star Bldg., Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City	Yi Hu Chinese	Senior Finance Manager
ACCENTURE, INC. MSE Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Sakhawat Hussain Indian	Project Manager
ACCENTURE, INC. MSE Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Devendra Singh Matharu Indian	Project Consultant
VENUS COSMECEUTIC CORPORATION Unit B 29/F Ayala FGU Center Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	Ji Hyeon Park Korean	President
VENUS COSMECEUTIC CORPORATION Unit B 29/F Ayala FGU Center Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	Tai Gu Kang Korean	Senior Marketing Manager
VENUS COSMECEUTIC CORPORATION Unit B 29/F Ayala FGU Center Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	Jinyoung Heo Korean	Sales & Distribution Manager
HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILS., INC. Unit 5302 53/F PBCom Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. Herrera St., Makati City	Baojiang Zhu Chinese	Radio Network Planning Operations Engineer
NO.1 ACTIVITY NETWORK SYSTEM (NANS), INC. Unit 22pc Eisenhower Condominium, 7 Eisenhower St., San Juan City	Eusoon Kim Korean	Asst. General Marketing
ASIAN TECH. COMPUTER SALES CORPORATION 26 Hemady, Mariana, Quezon City	Jia-Ying Weng Chinese	Software Developer
ASIAN TECH. COMPUTER SALES CORPORATION 26 Hemady, Mariana, Quezon City	Dong Weng Chinese	Software Developer (Team Head)
IHI PHILIPPINES INC. Unit 1104 West Tower, Phil. Stock & Exchange Center, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Hirokazu Morishita Japanese	Vice President
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH Bldg. 1, San Lorenzo Cmpd., Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila	Klara Tisocki Hungarian	Key Expert 4 Drug Regulation Specialist
IPS INTERNATIONAL PC STATION, INC. San Jose Bldg., 1119 Espana cor. P. Campa St., Sampaloc, Manila	Cholhui Lee Korean	Manager
M-TEC CORPORATION Unit 15, La Fuerza Plaza I, Don Chino Roces Ave., Makati City	Katsuhiro Oi Japanese	President
KHI MANILA PROPERTY, INC. SSHG Law Centre, 105 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Garry Phillip Constantine Australian	Vice President for Operations
HANESBRANDS PHILIPPINES, INC. Lot 2C Dona Irenea St., Ireneville Subd. I, Sucat, Paranaque City	Masafumi Oki Japanese	President and Chairman
CJ GLS PHILIPPINES, INC. 6/F T.M. Kalaw Center, T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila	Jongpil Kim Korean	Manager
CLUB PLATINUM, INC. 47 Polaris St., Bel-Air, Makati City	Jongguk Kim Korean	Manager
V-ZONE KTV B2 Malate Crown Plaza, 558 Adriatico cor. San Andres, Malate, Manila	Chang Geun Kwak Korean	Operation Manager
MICROSOFT PHILIPPINES, INC. 17/F 6750 Ayala Office Tower, 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Marivi Bonifacio Abueg American	Information Worker-Product Marketing Manager
R & G CONSTRUCTION DEV'T. & TRADING, INC. G/F Phil-Kor Business Ctr. Bldg., 81 Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Paranaque City	Kyung Soo Lee Korean	Administrator
COCA-COLA BOTTLERS PHILIPPINES, INC. 4/F King's Court Bldg. 2, 2129 Pasong Tamo, Makati City	Mark C. Harden American	Chief Finance and Business Systems Transformation Officer
FAR EAST REAL ESTATE PHILIPPINES INC. Rm. 53 5/F Zeta Bldg., Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Naoya Mori Japanese	IT Personnel

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

for RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC-Regional Director

(PDI - Sept. 27, 2007)

Burma, Somalia top corruption hit list

LONDON—SLEAZE IS HOBBLING THE RECOVery of war-ravaged countries such as Iraq and Somalia, which joined Burma (Myanmar) among states perceived to be the most corrupt, a respected antigraft watchdog reported on Wednesday.

Berlin-based Transparency International (TI) said in its annual Corruption Perceptions Index covering 180 countries that some of the world's poorest nations were seen as having the most dishonest political and business elites.

But the group said that even countries believed to be the least corrupt—named this year as Denmark, Finland and New Zealand—needed to do more to combat corporate graft.

"Despite some gains, corruption remains an enormous drain on resources sorely needed for education, health and infrastructure," the chairperson of the Berlin-based organization, Huguette Labelle, said in a statement.

"Low-scoring countries need to take these results seriously and act now to strengthen accountability in public institutions. But action from top-scoring countries is just as important, particularly in cracking down on corrupt activity in the private sector."

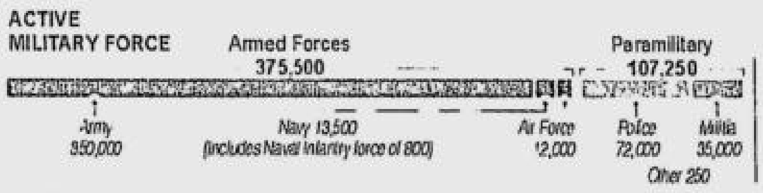
The index score relates to perceptions of the degree of corruption as seen by business people and country analysts. It ranges between zero, which is highly corrupt, and 10, which is very clean.

On the 2006 list, the worst levels of perceived corruption were in Haiti, Burma, Iraq and Guinea.

TI has frequently noted that because the index is based on subjective assessments, the fact that Iraq had such a low rating may be linked to the bigger international profile of the country since the US-led invasion in 2003 and the huge influx of reconstruction funds. *AFP*

BURMA'S MILITARY

Troops fired shots over the heads of a large crowd in central Yangon on Wednesday, sending people scurrying for cover as a crackdown intensified against the biggest anti-junta protests in 20 years, a witness said



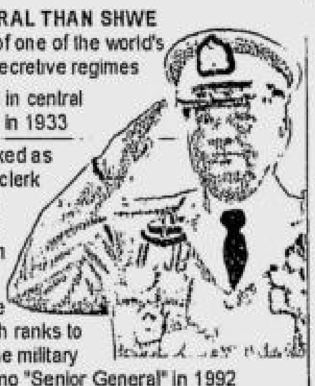
MILITARY EQUIPMENT

ARMY	Tanks 255	Armoured Personnel Carrier 325
NAVY	Patrol and combat ships 71	
AIR FORCE	Combat-capable aircraft 125	Helicopters 66

A TROUBLED PAST
Key events in Burma's history

- 885-86 Burma becomes a province of British India
- '93 Burma separates from British India
- 1942 Japan invades and occupies Burma
- '94 Britain liberates Burma from Japanese occupation
- 1948 Burma gains independence
- 62 An army revolt led by General Ne Win deposes democratic government
- 988 Massive confrontations between pro-democracy demonstrators and the military result in 3,000 deaths
- 98 Military renames Burma to Myanmar, a decision not approved by any sitting legislature in Burma
- ug. 2007 Doubling of diesel prices sparks protests against the government

GENERAL THAN SHWE
Head of one of the world's most secretive regimes



- Born in central Burma in 1933
- Worked as postal clerk before joining army in 1953
- Rose through ranks to become military supremo "Senior General" in 1992
- Rarely seen in public or out of uniform
- Known to have intense personal dislike of Suu Kyi; alleged to have walked out of meeting at the mention of her name
- Rumours that he is ill are unconfirmed

Sources: The Military Balance, GlobalSecurity.org, news reports

REUTERS

Burma's economic decline fuels growing protest movement

RANGOON—MYINT MYINT has lived on the margins most of her life, making little more than a dollar a day in impoverished Burma (Myanmar) as a construction worker. Then the military government doubled fuel prices last month.

The hike raised the bus fares most of the poor like Myint Myint—depend on to get to work and forced them to curtail necessities like food. It triggered a month of protests, which have become the largest wave of antigovernment demonstrations since a failed democratic uprising in 1988.

"My two children complained a lot … now they are getting used to eating just a meal a day," said Myint Myint, who lives in the outskirts of Burma's commercial capital Rangoon in a thatched shack with her unemployed husband and three children ages four to 11.

As they have done for decades, some like Myint Myint are bearing the new hardships with resigned stoicism and staying out of the antigovernment rallies. In country where an estimated 90 percent live on about $1-a-day, their priority is just surviving. They did not take part in the protests but are angry at the way the economy is being handled.

Experts said the government's mistake was raising fuel prices Aug. 15 overnight, without first publicly explaining the increase or considering a phased-in price hike as other Asian countries have done.

A similar misstep sparked the 1988 protests which the junta suppressed by killing thousands of demonstrators, just after the government increased the price of rice and voided the kyat currency, which left many with worthless money. *AP*

Junta's Than Shwe a master manipulator

THAN SHWE AFP

BANGKOK—BURMA'S (MYANmar's) ruling junta governs in total secrecy from a hidden mountain compound in their new capital, often announcing major decisions by surprise, leaving the country guessing their next move.

The junta leader, Senior Gen. Than Shwe, spent his early military career in a psychological warfare unit and has used that training to manipulate both his political adversaries like Aung San Suu Kyi, but also his rival generals.

Analysts say that Than Shwe is unpredictable because his decision-making is informed by an odd mix of military strategy, local tradition and other worldly beliefs like astrology.

David Mathieson, a Burma consultant for Human Rights Watch, said Than Shwe's overriding goal is maintaining total military control of the country.

"To them, keeping control of the country, and keeping the military as the premier institution is rational thought. That to them makes sense, whether it's ordained in the stars or in politics," he said.

Part of the problem is that Than Shwe appears to have no understanding of the hardships facing the people in Burma, which is ranked among the world's 20 poorest countries, Mathieson said.

"Probably a large part of the officer corps that travels around the country understands what is happening but is afraid to tell the old man," he said.

The current junta has ruled in total secrecy and near isolation since they toppled the previous dictator Ne Win during the 1988 unrest, with Than Shwe at the helm since 1992. *AFP*

Bush urges UN to pressure repressive regimes

UNITED NATIONS—US PRESIdent George W. Bush urged the United Nations on Tuesday to do more to fulfill its global responsibilities and press for change in countries ruled by brutal regimes.

Speaking before world leaders at the UN General Assembly, Bush called on the world body to go back to its guiding principles under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to defend freedom and battle hunger and disease.

"When innocent people are trapped in a life of murder and fear, the declaration is not being upheld," he said. "When millions of children starve to death or perish from a mosquito bite, we're not doing our duty in the world." Taking aim at familiar foes—Iran, North Korea, Burma, Cuba, and violent Islamic extremists—Bush urged "civilized nations" to help people suffering under dictatorships.

"In Belarus, North Korea, Syria, and Iran, brutal regimes deny their people the fundamental rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration," Bush told an audience including Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. *AFP*

Nasa ready to launch Dawn mission to asteroid belt

CAPE CANAVERAL—NASA IS READYING the Dawn spacecraft for launch on Thursday on a long-delayed mission to explore an asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter for clues to the birth of the solar system.

If successful, Dawn will be the first robotic probe to put itself into orbit around two different bodies, thanks to an extremely efficient electric engine powered by xenon gas.

Dawn's targets are two of the largest bodies in the asteroid belt, Vesta and Ceres, which scientists believe hold clues to the solar system's formation. Liftoff of an unmanned rocket carrying Dawn is targeted for 7:20 a.m. EDT on Thursday from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

Dawn's last launch attempt in July was canceled after a string of technical problems and weather delays cut into the satellite's launch opportunity. Nasa decided to launch its higher-priority Mars probe and then a space shuttle mission in August before returning Dawn to the launch pad.

The spacecraft is perched atop an unmanned Delta 2 rocket, which was to boost Dawn into orbit around Earth so it can unfold its 19.7 meter solar wing panels and fire up one of its three ion engines for the four-year trip to Vesta.

Dawn will slingshot itself around Mars in February 2009, but most of its speed will be built up slowly over time—very slowly.

The probe's engines work by pumping electrically charged ions of Xenon through an electric field, which accelerates the particles and prepares them for a 142,400-kilometer per hour escape into space. The force of the expelled gas causes the spacecraft to move in the opposite direction.

The motion, which is about equal to the pressure of a sheet of notebook paper on the human palm, is so gentle it would be useless on Earth. But in space, where there is no counteracting gravitational force, momentum builds up over time.

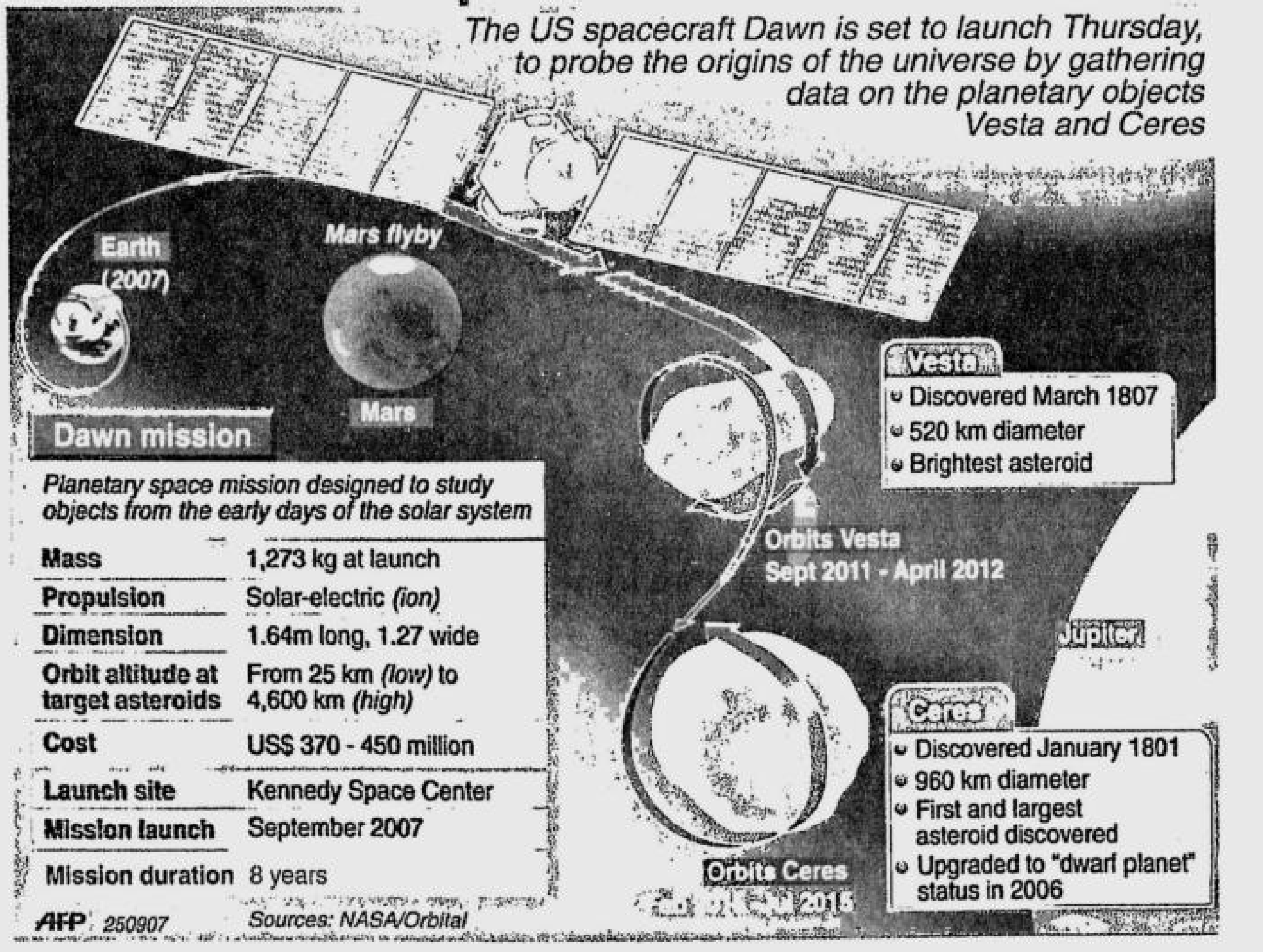
It will take Dawn about four days to accelerate from zero to 96 kph, but it will consume only 1.2 liters of fuel to do so. After 12 days, the spacecraft will reach more than 288 kph and after a year Dawn should be zipping along at a respectable 8,800 kph, having used only 57 liters of fuel.

"I call it acceleration with patience," said Dawn's lead engineer, Marc Rayman with Nasa's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

Traditional chemical thrusters are about one-tenth as efficient as Dawn's ion engine and require far more fuel, which is why once a spacecraft reaches its intended target it settles into orbit and stays there. *Reuters*

Nasa's trip to the asteroid belt

The US spacecraft Dawn is set to launch Thursday, to probe the origins of the universe by gathering data on the planetary objects Vesta and Ceres



Dawn mission

Planetary space mission designed to study objects from the early days of the solar system

Mass	1,273 kg at launch
Propulsion	Solar-electric *(ion)*
Dimension	1.64m long, 1.27 wide
Orbit altitude at target asteroids	From 25 km *(low)* to 4,600 km *(high)*
Cost	US$ 370 - 450 million
Launch site	Kennedy Space Center
Mission launch	September 2007
Mission duration	8 years

Vesta

- Discovered March 1807
- 520 km diameter
- Brightest asteroid

Ceres

- Discovered January 1801
- 960 km diameter
- First and largest asteroid discovered
- Upgraded to "dwarf planet" status in 2006

AFP 250907 Sources: NASA/Orbital

New Japanese premier heads for showdown

FUKUDA AP

TOKYO—JAPAN'S NEW PRIME Minister Yasuo Fukuda was ceremonially sworn into office on Wednesday as he headed toward a showdown with the resurgent opposition amid growing calls for snap elections.

A day after he was installed by parliament, Fukuda and his cabinet went to the sprawling imperial palace in central Tokyo where they were formally invested by Emperor Akihito.

"I feel good, good. I had a good night's sleep," Fukuda, clad in formal black tailed coat, told reporters as he left home for the palace ceremony.

Fukuda, a 71-year-old moderate veteran of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, succeeded conservative Shinzo Abe, who abruptly announced his resignation on Sept. 12 amid dwindling public approval.

As he took over as prime minister, Fukuda admitted he was under intense pressure to perform.

Fukuda kept 13 of the 19 ministers in Abe's last cabinet in place, opting for security to tide over tough times ahead.

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Fukuda, who admits he has a dry personality, is known as a behind-the-scenes operator adept at managing crises and is considered a dove in foreign policy who wants to improve ties with Japan's neighbors. *AFP*

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Burma, Somalia top corruption hit list

LONDON—SLEAZE IS HOBBLING THE RECOVERY of war-ravaged countries such as Iraq and Somalia, which joined Burma (Myanmar) among states perceived to be the most corrupt, a respected antigraft watchdog reported on Wednesday.

Berlin-based Transparency International (TI) said in its annual Corruption Perceptions Index covering 180 countries that some of the world's poorest nations were seen as having the most dishonest political and business elites.

But the group said that even countries believed to be the least corrupt—named this year as Denmark, Finland and New Zealand—needed to do more to combat corporate graft.

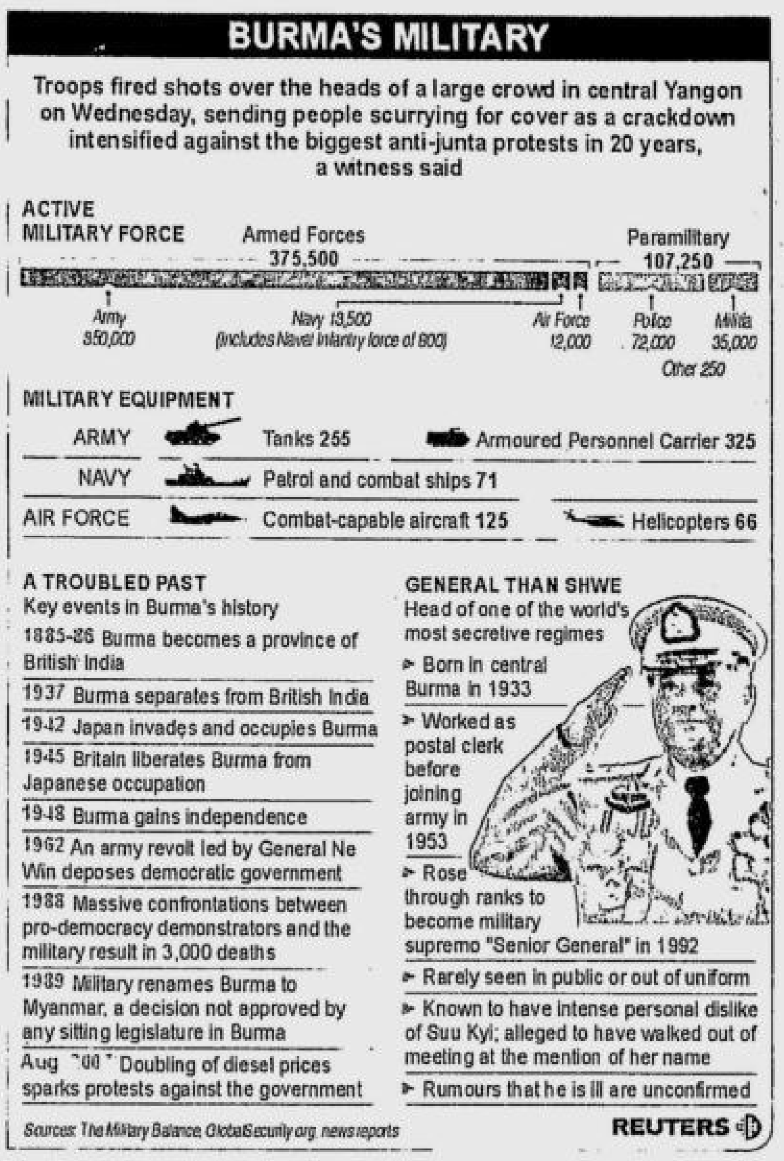
"Despite some gains, corruption remains an enormous drain on resources sorely needed for education, health and infrastructure," the chairperson of the Berlin-based organization, Huguette Labelle, said in a statement.

"Low-scoring countries need to take these results seriously and act now to strengthen accountability in public institutions. But action from top-scoring countries is just as important, particularly in cracking down on corrupt activity in the private sector."

The index score relates to perceptions of the degree of corruption as seen by business people and country analysts. It ranges between zero, which is highly corrupt, and 10, which is very clean.

On the 2006 list, the worst levels of perceived corruption were in Haiti, Burma, Iraq and Guinea.

TI has frequently noted that because the index is based on subjective assessments, the fact that Iraq had such a low rating may be linked to the bigger international profile of the country since the US-led invasion in 2003 and the huge influx of reconstruction funds. *AFP*



BURMA'S MILITARY

Troops fired shots over the heads of a large crowd in central Yangon on Wednesday, sending people scurrying for cover as a crackdown intensified against the biggest anti-junta protests in 20 years, a witness said

MILITARY EQUIPMENT

ARMY	Tanks 255	Armoured Personnel Carrier 325
NAVY	Patrol and combat ships 71	
AIR FORCE	Combat-capable aircraft 125	Helicopters 66

A TROUBLED PAST

Key events in Burma's history

1885-86 Burma becomes a province of British India

1937 Burma separates from British India

1942 Japan invades and occupies Burma

1945 Britain liberates Burma from Japanese occupation

1948 Burma gains independence

1962 An army revolt led by General Ne Win deposes democratic government

1988 Massive confrontations between pro-democracy demonstrators and the military result in 3,000 deaths

1989 Military renames Burma to Myanmar, a decision not approved by any sitting legislature in Burma

Aug '00 ' Doubling of diesel prices sparks protests against the government

GENERAL THAN SHWE

Head of one of the world's most secretive regimes

- Born in central Burma in 1933
- Worked as postal clerk before joining army in 1953
- Rose through ranks to become military supremo "Senior General" in 1992
- Rarely seen in public or out of uniform
- Known to have intense personal dislike of Suu Kyi; alleged to have walked out of meeting at the mention of her name
- Rumours that he is ill are unconfirmed

Sources: The Military Balance, GlobalSecurity.org, news reports

REUTERS

Burma's economic decline fuels growing protest movement

RANGOON—MYINT MYINT has lived on the margins most of her life, making little more than a dollar a day in impoverished Burma (Myanmar) as a construction worker. Then the military government doubled fuel prices last month.

The hike raised the bus fares most of the poor like Myint Myint—depend on to get to work and forced them to curtail necessities like food. It triggered a month of protests, which have become the largest wave of antigovernment demonstrations since a failed democratic uprising in 1988.

"My two children complained a lot ... now they are getting used to eating just a meal a day," said Myint Myint, who lives in the outskirts of Burma's commercial capital Rangoon in a thatched shack with her unemployed husband and three children ages four to 11.

As they have done for decades, some like Myint Myint are bearing the new hardships with resigned stoicism and staying out of the antigovernment rallies. In country where an estimated 90 percent live on about $1-a-day, their priority is just surviving. They did not take part in the protests but are angry at the way the economy is being handled.

Experts said the government's mistake was raising fuel prices Aug. 15 overnight, without first publicly explaining the increase or considering a phased-in price hike as other Asian countries have done.

A similar misstep sparked the 1988 protests which the junta suppressed by killing thousands of demonstrators, just after the government increased the price of rice and voided the kyat currency, which left many with worthless money. *AP*

Junta's Than Shwe a master manipulator

THAN SHWE AFP

BANGKOK—BURMA'S (MYANMAR's) ruling junta governs in total secrecy from a hidden mountain compound in their new capital, often announcing major decisions by surprise, leaving the country guessing their next move.

The junta leader, Senior Gen. Than Shwe, spent his early military career in a psychological warfare unit and has used that training to manipulate both his political adversaries like Aung San Suu Kyi, but also his rival generals.

Analysts say that Than Shwe is unpredictable because his decision-making is informed by an odd mix of military strategy, local tradition and other worldly beliefs like astrology.

David Mathieson, a Burma consultant for Human Rights Watch, said Than Shwe's overriding goal is maintaining total military control of the country.

"To them, keeping control of the country, and keeping the military as the premier institution is rational thought. That to them makes sense, whether it's ordained in the stars or in politics," he said.

Part of the problem is that Than Shwe appears to have no understanding of the hardships facing the people in Burma, which is ranked among the world's 20 poorest countries, Mathieson said.

"Probably a large part of the officer corps that travels around the country understands what is happening but is afraid to tell the old man," he said.

The current junta has ruled in total secrecy and near isolation since they toppled the previous dictator Ne Win during the 1988 unrest, with Than Shwe at the helm since 1992. *AFP*

Bush urges UN to pressure repressive regimes

UNITED NATIONS—US PRESIDENT George W. Bush urged the United Nations on Tuesday to do more to fulfill its global responsibilities and press for change in countries ruled by brutal regimes.

Speaking before world leaders at the UN General Assembly, Bush called on the world body to go back to its guiding principles under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to defend freedom and battle hunger and disease.

"When innocent people are trapped in a life of murder and fear, the declaration is not being upheld," he said. "When millions of children starve to death or perish from a mosquito bite, we're not doing our duty in the world."

Taking aim at familiar foes—Iran, North Korea, Burma, Cuba, and violent Islamic extremists—Bush urged "civilized nations" to help people suffering under dictatorships.

"In Belarus, North Korea, Syria, and Iran, brutal regimes deny their people the fundamental rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration," Bush told an audience including Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. *AFP*

Nasa ready to launch Dawn mission to asteroid belt

CAPE CANAVERAL—NASA IS READYING the Dawn spacecraft for launch on Thursday on a long-delayed mission to explore an asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter for clues to the birth of the solar system.

If successful, Dawn will be the first robotic probe to put itself into orbit around two different bodies, thanks to an extremely efficient electric engine powered by xenon gas.

Dawn's targets are two of the largest bodies in the asteroid belt, Vesta and Ceres, which scientists believe hold clues to the solar system's formation. Liftoff of an unmanned rocket carrying Dawn is targeted for 7:20 a.m. EDT on Thursday from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

Dawn's last launch attempt in July was canceled after a string of technical problems and weather delays cut into the satellite's launch opportunity. Nasa decided to launch its higher-priority Mars probe and then a space shuttle mission in August before returning Dawn to the launch pad.

The spacecraft is perched atop an unmanned Delta 2 rocket, which was to boost Dawn into orbit around Earth so it can unfold its 19.7 meter solar wing panels and fire up one of its three ion engines for the four-year trip to Vesta.

Dawn will slingshot itself around Mars in February 2009, but most of its speed will be built up slowly over time—very slowly.

The probe's engines work by pumping electrically charged ions of Xenon through an electric field, which accelerates the particles and prepares them for a 142,400-kilometer per hour escape into space. The force of the expelled gas causes the spacecraft to move in the opposite direction.

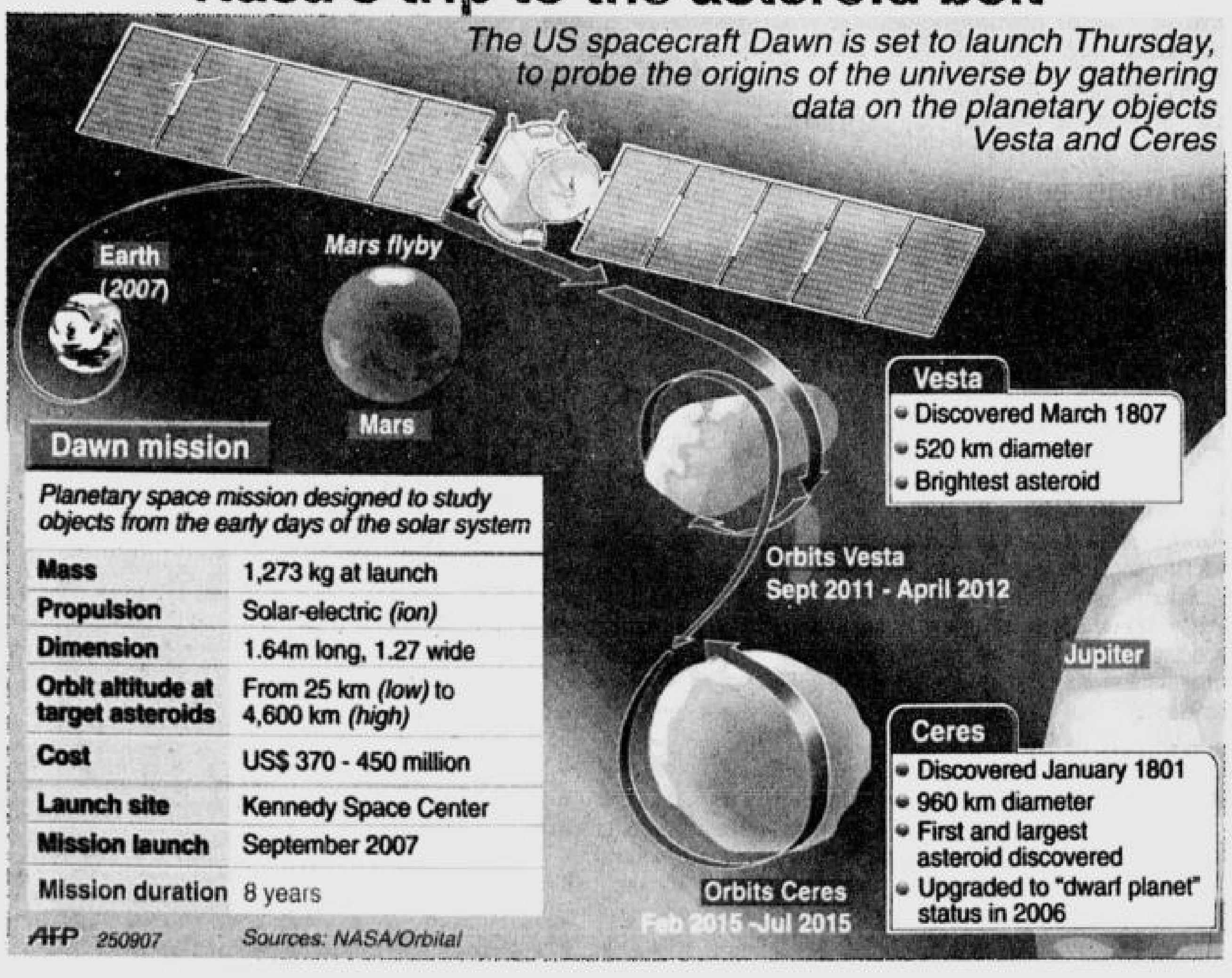
The motion, which is about equal to the pressure of a sheet of notebook paper on the human palm, is so gentle it would be useless on Earth. But in space, where there is no counteracting gravitational force, momentum builds up over time.

It will take Dawn about four days to accelerate from zero to 96 kph, but it will consume only 1.2 liters of fuel to do so. After 12 days, the spacecraft will reach more than 288 kph and after a year Dawn should be zipping along at a respectable 8,800 kph, having used only 57 liters of fuel.

"I call it acceleration with patience," said Dawn's lead engineer, Marc Rayman with Nasa's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

Traditional chemical thrusters are about one-tenth as efficient as Dawn's ion engine and require far more fuel, which is why once a spacecraft reaches its intended target it settles into orbit and stays there. *Reuters*

Nasa's trip to the asteroid belt



The US spacecraft Dawn is set to launch Thursday, to probe the origins of the universe by gathering data on the planetary objects Vesta and Ceres

Earth (2007)
Mars flyby
Mars
Orbits Vesta Sept 2011 - April 2012
Jupiter
Orbits Ceres Feb 2015 -Jul 2015

Vesta

- Discovered March 1807
- 520 km diameter
- Brightest asteroid

Ceres

- Discovered January 1801
- 960 km diameter
- First and largest asteroid discovered
- Upgraded to "dwarf planet" status in 2006

Dawn mission

Planetary space mission designed to study objects from the early days of the solar system

Mass	1,273 kg at launch
Propulsion	Solar-electric *(ion)*
Dimension	1.64m long, 1.27 wide
Orbit altitude at target asteroids	From 25 km *(low)* to 4,600 km *(high)*
Cost	US$ 370 - 450 million
Launch site	Kennedy Space Center
Mission launch	September 2007
Mission duration	8 years

AFP 250907 Sources: NASA/Orbital

New Japanese premier heads for showdown

FUKUDA AP

TOKYO—JAPAN'S NEW PRIME Minister Yasuo Fukuda was ceremonially sworn into office on Wednesday as he headed toward a showdown with the resurgent opposition amid growing calls for snap elections.

A day after he was installed by parliament, Fukuda and his cabinet went to the sprawling imperial palace in central Tokyo where they were formally invested by Emperor Akihito.

"I feel good, good. I had a good night's sleep," Fukuda, clad in formal black tailed coat, told reporters as he left home for the palace ceremony.

Fukuda, a 71-year-old moderate veteran of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, succeeded conservative Shinzo Abe, who abruptly announced his resignation on Sept. 12 amid dwindling public approval.

As he took over as prime minister, Fukuda admitted he was under intense pressure to perform.

Fukuda kept 13 of the 19 ministers in Abe's last cabinet in place, opting for security to tide over tough times ahead.

"I would call this a cabinet that has its back to the wall," Fukuda told a news conference on Tuesday evening. "If we do a single thing wrong, the Liberal Democratic Party may lose its control of the government."

The opposition ended a half-century of LDP control of the upper house of parliament in July elections after Abe's government was embroiled in incessant scandals.

Main opposition leader Ichiro Ozawa led his Democratic Party to the victory by accusing the staunchly conservative Abe of neglecting bread-and-butter issues, winning over rural voters resentful of free-market reforms.

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The opposition is now seeking snap elections for the more powerful lower house of parliament and has vowed to scuttle Fukuda's agenda.

The new premier's first task is to extend a military mission supporting US-led forces in Afghanistan, which the opposition has promised to block despite calls from the United States and other Western allies to continue it.

Fukuda, who admits he has a dry personality, is known as a behind-the-scenes operator adept at managing crises and is considered a dove in foreign policy who wants to improve ties with Japan's neighbors. *AFP*

WHAT'S INSIDE
Bata, Django scrape past Scots /A26

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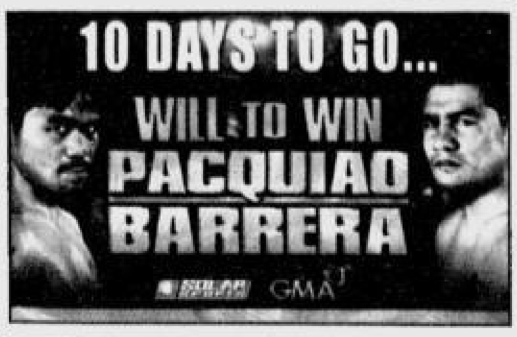

10 DAYS TO GO...
WILL TO WIN
PACQUIAO
BARRERA
GMA

Green Archers eye Finals against Blue Eagles today

By Jasmine W. Payo

GAME TODAY *(Araneta Coliseum)*
3 p.m.—La Salle vs Ateneo

HEATED WORDS MAY BE MISSING, but the intense rivalry will not be missed.

After close-shaves and controversies highlighted their three battles this season, fierce rivals Ateneo and La Salle take their UAAP basketball feud to another level today at the Araneta Coliseum.

This time, the remaining championship berth is at stake. The Green Archers automatically grab the title slot with a win at 3 p.m. while the Blue Eagles need a victory to force a playoff for the right to challenge first finalist University of the East.

"In this scenario, there's no more momentum," said coach Franz Pumaren, whose Archers, coming from back-to-back losses, locked up today's twice-to-beat incentive with a win over the Eagles in their third meeting last Sept. 19.

It is actually the second straight do-or-die battle for the Eagles, who dethroned the University of Santo Tomas Tigers in the stepladder semifinals last Sunday

"We better win so we can play again," said Ateneo mentor Norman Black "Otherwise, our season is over. That's our focus right now, to live and play another game."

Both squads know how incredibly unpredictable their games go. Their last three contests were decided by no more than three points.

But the Archers know that in the last seven times they have secured the twice-to-beat bonus, they went on to reach the Finals.

"We all worked hard for this," said Pumaren. "I don't think my players will allow that advantage to be taken away."

Black knows the tidbit as well, but has kept his focus on keeping the Eagles in game shape.

"What happened in the past has no concern to me at all," said Black. "Whenever we play La Salle, the most important thing is our energy level. They like to press a lot, they trap a lot. It takes a lot of

GREEN/ A26

Lions repeat as NCAA champs

Menor keys rout of Knights

By June Navarro

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

LUCKY 13: The Red Lions, led by coach Frankie Lim (second from left, standing) and MVP Ogie Menor (bottom left) celebrate their victory.

OGIE MENOR WAS HIS USUAL STOIC SELF FOCUSING on the task at hand throughout the one-sided encounter.

But after looking at the clock one last time, the San Beda enforcer liked what he saw and finally managed to smile.

Menor can now relax after powering the Red Lions to the 83rd NCAA men's basketball crown with a 76-64 win over the Letran Knights last night before an overflow crowd at the Araneta Coliseum.

Feeling the pressure early on, Menor loosened up in the second half and drilled in 18 of his game-high 25 points as the Red Lions duplicated their championship run last season.

"I got my confidence back when my shots started to go in," said the 6-foot-2 Menor, who was adjudged Finals MVP.

"I don't think anybody in the league could stop him," said San Beda coach Frankie Lim of his chief gunner.

It was the 13th NCAA seniors' crown for the Red Lions, moving the Mendiola-based dribblers to third overall in the championship title race behind Ateneo's 14 and Letran's 15.

Interestingly, Lim was part of the 1977-1978 San Beda squad, which won back-to-back NCAA titles prior to their accomplishment last night.

"I'm lucky to have intelligent players," said Lim. "I feel very rewarded."

The Red Lion's sound strategy was tested in the third quarter.

Behind the sniping of RJ Jazul and Bryan Faundo's timely baskets, the Knights stormed back from 17 points down and advanced within 49-55.

But Pong Escobal, Borgie Hermida and Menor patiently waited for the right time to unleash another attack.

The cue came from Menor, who completed a three-point play, then followed it with a triple from the top of the key before finising off another fastbreak play that finally ripped the game apart.

Yousif Aljamal outscored the entire Letran crew in the first quarter, tossing in 13 points in a wild 26-12 outburst that hinted of things to come for the Red Lions.

Meanwhile, Kelvin Dela Peña of Mapua edged Aljamal to bag the NCAA seniors' MVP award. Dela Peña compiled a player all-around value of 51.4 points to beat Aljamal, who amassed 50.7 points.

Marcelo David of San Beda snagged the Rookie of the Year plum and Hayes is the season's most improved player.

In juniors' action, Ryan Buenafe and Arvie Bringas powered the San Sebastian Staglets to their third straight crown with an 88-83 win over the Letran Squires.

Buenafe, the runaway NCAA juniors' MVP, erupted for 37 points while the 6-foot-5 Bringas contributed 24 points and 23 rebounds as the Staglets also swept the best-of-three series.

The scores:

First Game (Juniors)

SAN SEBASTIAN 88—Buenafe 37, Bringas 24, Gusi 13, Cam 4, Mamaril 4, Jo. Delgado 3, Je. Delgado 3, Andrada 0, Estrada 0, Delgado 0, Ortuoste 0, Ramsey 0.

LETRAN 83—San Jose 27, Noble 20, Kr. Alas 15, Reforsado 8, Ke. Alas 7, Bagsit 4, Romeo 2, Munsayac 0, Khobuntin 0.

Quarters: 22-15, 46-34, 64-56, 88-83

Second Game (Seniors)

SAN BEDA 76—Menor 25, Aljamal 24, Escobal 7, Hermida 6, Gamalinda 6, Ekwe 4, Taganas 2, Tirona 2, Marcelo 0, Tecson 0, Lanete 0, Maggay 0.

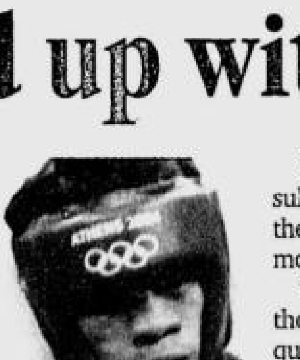
LETRAN 64—Faundo 17, Jazul 14, Melegrito 8, Guevarra 6, Quinday 5, Daa 4, Gutiiban 3, Dangcal 2, Foronda 2, Cabonce 2, Del Rosario 1, Reposar 0.

Quarters: 26-12, 43-29, 57-49, 76-64

Top 3 Olympic hopes end up with silvers

TIPON

PAYLA



TAÑAMOR

THE PHILIPPINE-SMART BOXING team settled for three silver medals as Joan Tipon, Violito Payla and Harry Tañamor, the country's top Olympic hopefuls, bowed to superior rivals Monday at the Ostrava Grand Prix in the Czech Republic.

Tipon and Payla, who captured gold medals in the Doha Asian Games last year, were roundly beaten but light flyweight Tañamor narrowly lost to Russian Vadim Idigeshev, 16-20, after fighting toe-to-toe with his favored foe.

"We feel that Harry made the clearer punches in the later rounds, but the judges saw it otherwise," said head coach Pat Gaspi in an overseas call to Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines president Manny T. Lopez.

Tipon tried hard but found Hungarian David Oltvanyi too fast and too foxy and lost, 1-10, in the battle for the bantamweight gold.

Payla, a flyweight, suffered a 12-21 setback from another Russian, Evgeny Ermakov, in the finals.

"Not bad," said Lopez. "I think the results augur well for our preparations for the World Boxing Championships next month in Chicago, Illinois."

The Abap is sending the same team to the Chicago tournament, which is a qualifier for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Also supported by Pacific Heights and Philippine Sports Commission, the Filipinos earlier picked a bronze courtesy of lightweight Genebert Basadre. The other RP members are featherweight Charly Suarez, light welterweight Delfin Boholst and welterweight Willie Lopez.

Russia actually dominated the week-long slugfest with seven gold medals.

Hungary, Croatia, Sweden, Czech Republic won one gold medal each.

Rosales, Lascuña seek one of five World Cup slots

KUALA LUMPUR—GERALD ROSALES AND Tony Lascuña will tee up against 16 other two-man teams from Asia, Europe and Africa today in the Fortis International Challenge at the Kota Permai Golf and Country Club.

The two Filipinos are pooling their talents for the first time in an attempt to secure a top-five finish and qualify for November's Omega Mission Hills World Cup in Shenzhen, China, which offers total prize money of $5 million.

"We are up against some of the world's finest players, so we'll do our best to play as a team," said Lascuña. "We have to complement each other's strength in this tournament."

The Fortis International Challenge will use the four-ball (better ball) format in the first and third rounds and foursomes (alternate shot) in the second and final rounds.

Thailand's Thongchai Jaidee and Prayad Marksaeng, who have a combined 13 wins on the Asian Tour, will start as favorites along with Malaysian duo Airil Rizman and Iain Steel.

The New Zealand combination of Richard Lee and Stephen Scahill are also favored with both players keen to play their way to China after Michael Campbell, the 2005 US Open champion, failed to qualify through the Official World Golf Ranking. *Asian Tour News*

4 Pinoy jins brace for world tourney

By Marc Anthony Reyes

OLYMPIC HOPEFULS: Team Philippines' (from left) Alexander Briones, Eunice Alora, Toni Rivero, Thsomlee Go and head coach Kitoy Cruz at Piccadilly station.

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND—THE Philippine taekwondo team made it to this wintry, rain-drenched city Tuesday afternoon—weary after a 24-hour trip but still upbeat over the prospect of bagging tickets to the Beijing Olympics next year.

Olympians Thsomlee Go and Mary Antoinette Rivero, Asian Games bronze medalist Kathleen Eunice Alora and veteran Alexander Briones were immediately given a noonday training schedule by organizers Wednesday along with fighters from Jordan and Vietnam.

The Filipinos are competing in the World Championships beginning here on Friday at the M.E.N. (Manchester Evening News) Arena which is just a 10-minute walk from where the Philippine team is billeted.

Beijing Olympic slots

The tournament rewards automatic Beijing Olympic slots to the jins finishing third place or better.

Nineteen-year-old Alora, the 2006 Doha Asian Games bronze winner and 2005 Southeast Asian Games champion, is set to compete on the first day in the women's -49 kilogram category, according to the schedule given out by the organizers.

Doha Asiad silver medalists Go and Rivero get going on Saturday in the men's -58kg and women's -67kg classes, respectively.

Briones, 2006 Asian Championships silver medalist, will see action on Sept. 30 in the men's -80kg.

Drawing of lots

The drawing of lots and team managers' meeting will be on Thursday at the elegant Midland Hotel near St. Peter's Square at the heart of this city famed for its industrial revolution-era cotton mills and the Premier League powerhouse team Manchester United.

Philippine Taekwondo Association executive vice president Sung Chon Hong, who leads the team which also includes Olympian and national coach Roberto "Kitoy" Cruz, expects a tough outing for the Filipinos with about 700 of the world's toughest jins entered.

"This is the first Olympic qualiying for the year, so everybody is here," Hong told the INQUIRER. "They want to test their strength here before going to the continental qualifying events.

"There are many tough competitors here but only 48 will go to the Olympics."

It's not enough to make it to the semifinals, Hong said, because third place—and the Olympics slot—will have to be contested.

Hong said he would be happy even if only one from among the four Filipinos makes it to the Olympics considering the strength of the field.

"I'm confident [of performing well here] because I've been through this before," said the 26-year-old Go, who made it to the 2004 Athens Olympics after bagging third place in the Paris qualifying.

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Bata, Django scrape past Scots

EFREN "BATA" REYES AND FRANCISCO "DJANGO" BUSTAMANTE SLIPPED past Michael Valentine and Pat Holtz of Scotland, 8-6, Tuesday at the start of the 2007 PartyPoker.net World Cup of Pool at the Outland Nightclub in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

The defending champion Filipinos swept to an early 6-1 lead but the Scots rallied to tie it before Reyes and Bustamante lifted the level of their game to reach the round of 16 against Croatians Philipp Stojanovic and Ivica Putnik.

The Croats also struggled before eliminating the Russian team of Konstantin Stepanov and Ruslan Chinakhov, 8-5.

Other teams who made it to the next round were France, China, Netherlands A and Japan.

Stephan Cohen and Vincent Facquet of France booted out Italians Fabio Petroni and Bruno Muratore, 8-2; China's Li Hewen and Fu Jianbo took out South Africa's Juan de Beer and Clinton Rossouw, 8-1; Niels Feijen and Nick van Den Berg of Netherlands A ousted Indonesians Ricky Yang and Muhammed Zulfikri, 8-5; and Japan's Satoshi Kawabata and Naoyoki Oi bested their rivals from Spain, 8-2.

Wednesday's matches pit Austria against Australia, Germany against Singapore, Taiwan against Denmark, Netherlands B against Belgium, Canada against India, Vietnam against South Korea, England against Poland and Finland against Qatar.

The RP-Croatia match is set Thursday. The quarterfinals will be on Friday and Saturday and the semifinals and finals on Sunday.

The scotch doubles tournament featuring two-man teams from 31 countries uses the winner's-break format. The winning team splits $60,000 from the prize fund of $250,000.

Reyes and Bustamante clinched the inaugural trophy last August when they defeated a Team America made up of Rodney "Rocket" Morris and Earl "The Pearl" Strickland in the final at the Newport Centre, Newport, Wales.

Morris is back this time with former US Open champion Corey Deuel.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

FRANCISCO "Django" Bustamante makes his shot as Efren "Bata" Reyes awaits his turn in last year's tourney.

Pacman bares serious defensive lapses

Sparring partner sneaks in thundering rights to Filipino's head

By Recah Trinidad

LOS ANGELES—MANNY PACQUIAO'S mission to again crush Mexico's Marco Antonio Barrera may not come trouble-free based on the result of a sparring session that saw the Filipino boxing superstar getting repeatedly tagged with right shots to the head yesterday.

The 28-year-old Pacquiao, an overwhelming pick to repeat over Barrera whom he had stopped four years ago, was predictably strong and brimmed with stamina in his eight-round drill against two Mexicans fighters.

But the defensive lapses were too stark to be overlooked by both fans and experts that again milled inside the Wild Card gym in Pacquiao's second workout here since arriving from his Cebu training on Saturday.

Freddie Roach saw it all and, although the famous trainer did not readily manifest alarm, he promised to talk to Pacquiao about his initial apprehensions.

"Freddie (Roach) said he would have to ask Manny to polish up on defense and use his right hand with more confidence," bared a Filipino newsman who talked to the trainer after the sparring yesterday.

MANNY Pacquiao pummels the mitts in Sunday's training session at the Wild Card gym of trainer Freddie Roach (left).

Twenty-one-year-old David Cervantes, 10-0, back from a year-and-a-half lay-off, got blasted around the ring, but also had Pacquiao on the receiving end during furious exchanges.

Cervantes, visibly overweight, confirmed that Pacquiao hits like a middleweight, but also suggested the RP boxing hero may not be exactly invincible.

"He's very persistent and terribly powerful, but Barrera is more crafty, experienced," Cervantes, an alternate in the 2004 Mexico boxing team, explained to the INQUIRER.

Roach training deputy Eric Brown did notice the right hands that had clearly thudded on the green, sweat-swathed head gear, but explained Pacquiao could be expected to be more settled when he resumes sparring Thursday.

Pacquiao had an easier time with David Rodela in the second half of sparring and even allowed the lean Mexican to openly bang his body at midring in a display of hard-earned toughness.

Rodela, who was with Pacquiao in the Cebu training camp, also managed to score clear shots to the head.

"Well, in boxing, you could also be lucky," he said, adding Pacquiao, based on their mock encounters, has been ready as early as two weeks ago.

Pacquiao did get applauded at the end of the sparring drill, but he was more delightful to watch when he worked non-stop for an hour and 21 minutes with the mitts on Monday.

He hosted lunch for fans and team members at the Nat's Thai restaurant after yesterday's drill.

Pacquiao motors to Las Vegas on Monday, for the final tapering portion of preparations against Barrera at the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino on Oct. 6.

Yes, Barrera has two chances, real ones

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

LOS ANGELES—NOTHING WRONG if you had to walk a mile for a Camel, explained an old lung cancer commercial.

But what's wrong with voting and betting for a countryman in a forthcoming monumental boxing contest?

Out here yesterday, and maybe in the weeks before, you could walk five or 10 miles and still find not a single Mexicano ready and willing to put his tequila and beer allowance on Marco Antonio Barrera.

Sorry to report this, but siding with Barrera in his forthcoming fight with Manny Pacquiao has also started to be treated here as a non-adventure, a blind gamble, if not outright financial suicide.

* * *

You could blame or credit that on the widely read boxing wit Michael Marley, who last week pummeled a Filipino lawyer from Cebu for challenging him to a fistfight before cowering and immediately going out of sight.

Marley bought the taunt that Barrera had only two chances left.

Slim and none.

That, you bet, was gleefully peddled by Pinoy Hermie Rivera, a Marley favorite.

However, Marley would up the ante in a hilarious but believable claim.

Sorry, he said, but Slim has gone out of town!

* * *

So who else were trying to mercilessly unsell Senor Barrera?

"No way, hopeless," Henry Bidoy, a Mexican website reporter, swore after watching Pacquiao cover all possible Barrera escape routes during a non-stop punching drill.

Videos were disallowed around the gym by trainer Freddie Roach, but tales of an impending mismatch come Oct. 6 in Las Vegas (Oct. 7 in Manila) would surely spread far and wide.

Jose Gomez, jolly *paisano* who takes charge of the old laundromat on the ground floor of Wild Card, just shook his head and said he would not be caught betting on Barrera.

* * *

Well, it could be plain coincidence, but off Santa Monica last Sunday morning, Manny Pacquiao dropped by a property he had bought here where outside the ten-room apartment building gathered five Mexicans of various age.

After recognizing and shaking hands with Pacquiao, they were buttonholed by Hermie Rivera, who arrived from Newark on Saturday.

Hermie happily reported, there was one among the five, the eldest in the group—a balding retiree who must be over 65—who picked Barrera.

But, mind you, he did so only out of sentimentality and undying patriotic fervor.

* * *

To repeat, even his countrymen would have to let make-believe reign for Barrera to corner enough bets in his rematch with Pacquiao.

Who knows? Erik Morales must've himself caused all the rising discrepancy after he had openly picked Pacquiao.

In case you've forgotten, Morales has had three fights with both Pacquiao and Barrera.

He won the first one over Pacquiao, who got cut and terribly bloodied in that encounter.

Morales, however, miserably lost by stoppage in the next two bouts.

Barrera was 2-1 over Morales, but all their encounters went the distance.

* * *

Well, we walked more than 10 miles and there was only one Mexican nationalist who bravely sided with his fellow *paisano*.

"*Hindi matatapos ang* round (It won't last the distance)," Filipino trainer Ben Delgado, who handled Pacquiao in his fight against Leloh Ledwabah in 2002, claimed.

He said Barrera would have to be extra lucky to be still standing by the 8th round.

That's it, folks. But listen before you place your bets.

Barrera may not have to walk 10 miles in order to dig for a chance at an upset win.

He has two chances.

One: If Pacquiao suffers the misfortune of getting gored and cut.

Two: If Pacquiao does not come in aptly prepared to block or avoid Barrera's patended left uppercut.

There was no visible effort to work out a defense against this dreaded weapon in yesterday's well-applauded Pacquiao workout.

Softball body to host int'l congress Oct. 24

FIFTEEN YEARS AFTER STAGING THE MEN'S world softball championship in Manila, the country plays host to the 23rd International Softball Federation (ISF) Congress on Oct. 24-27 at the Edsa Shagri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong.

ISF president Don Porter of the United States said more than 150 delegates and representatives from 75 countries, together with the members of the ISF executive council, will attend the congress.

"The ISF Congress will definitely have a big impact on the game," said Porter. "It will be a good opportunity for us to sit down with the representatives from our member countries from all over the world.

"We can accomplish much while we are all together. We are certain that the Philippines will be a great host for this important event."

It will be the first time that the ISF Congress will be held in Southeast Asia and Porter expressed gratitude for the Philippines' decision to host it.

"The country's selection as host is a tribute to the organizing skills of Filipinos," said Amateur Softball Association of the Philippines (Asaphil) president Jean Henri Lhuillier, whose companies Cebuana Lhuillier and Le Soleil de Boracay are the major sponsors of the event.

The congress will open with commission meetings. The assembly ends on Oct. 27.

SPORTSWATCH

Pagadian dribblers split two Minda goodwill games

MAYOR SAMMY CO'S PAGADIAN EXplorers split its two goodwill games in Mindanao against prospective expansion teams recently as part of their preparation for the 2nd NBC invitational tournament next month.

The Explorers nipped the Lamitan All-Stars, 114-112, at the Basilan gym in Basilan City, but dropped a 97-98 decision to the Zamboanga All-Stars in Zamboanga City the next day.

The Explorers also conducted a basketball clinic for some 60 kids in the first ever game played in Basilan mainly through the efforts of JCI-Lamitan's Gem Furigay, Long San Juan and Roy Mateo, Lamitan Mayor Roderick H. Furigay and Rene Pamaran.

Ex-pro Mike Orquillas paced the Explorers with 22 points while Lamitan's Tantan Pareno shot a game-high 42 markers.

Mayor Furigay announced that he would build a P50-million gymnasium.

JC Araojo sparkled for the Zambos with 30 points in their game against Pagadian. The Zamboanga match was made possible by Junie Navarro, Sangguniang Kabataan of Zamboanga City and Aquaworld Purified Drinking Water.

Zamboanga has committed to join NBC next year. In fact, it aims to sign up Randy Lopez, Tristan Codamon, Orly Daroya, Rona Capati and Bong dela Cruz.

Will to Win showdown 'live'

SOLAR SPORTS WILL SHOW THE MANny Pacquiao-Marco Antonio Barrera fight "live" from Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas on Oct. 7 at Starmall Edsa and Metropolis Star Alabang,

The 12-round tussle starts at 8 a.m.

The 28-year-old Pacquiao scored an 11th-round TKO win over Barrera the first time they met at the Alamodome in Texas in November 2003.

MC 5-stag derby Saturday

QUALITY MATCHES ARE EXPECTED when the WTJ Altuz 5-Stag Derby kicks off Saturday at the Makati Coliseum with B-Meg Derby Ace and Gran Matador as main backers.

Host Ram Lopez, supported by promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co of WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp., is staking a guaranteed prize of P500,000 for an entry fee of P22,000.

Entries must be submitted tomorrow from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. For inquries, call 896-3545 or 895-6475.

Stags banded by breeders groups PCAP, GCAP, Migba, Pagba, NGBA, LGBA, UGBA, NFGB, GF- BAN, RGBA, BBC, Lagba, CVBA and Cegba will be accepted.

Green Archers eye Finals . . .

From page A25

energy out of your ball carriers. So it's very important that we're fresh, that we have a lot of energy to break their press."

But the Eagles have shown twice this season that they can overcome the Archers' trademark defense via an 80-77 overtime triumph in the first round and an 89-87 followup to complete an elimination-round sweep.

The Archers, however, reminded the Eagles that it's the crucial games that matter after pulling off a slim 70-69 win in their playoff for the No. 2 spot

"The first three games were evenly matched, they were very close and very competitive," Black had said. "But I don't think the past games really have any meaning when we fight them on Thursday." *Jasmine W. Payo*

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TIGER Woods blasts out of a bunker during a practice round for the President's Cup at the Royal Montreal Golf Club. Woods was named Player of the Year by the PGA for the 11th time. REUTERS

Woods on top of the world again

Tiger claims 11th PGA Player of the Year crown

WOODS: Pick your partner REUTERS

MIAMI—WORLD NO. 1 TIGER Woods was named PGA Player of the Year on Tuesday for the ninth time in 11 seasons.

Woods dominated the PGA Tour, winning seven titles in 16 starts, including his 13th major victory in the US PGA Championship at Southern Hills.

The 31-year-old American ended his campaign two weeks ago with a memorable double, clinching the Tour Championship by eight shots and inaugural FedExCup honours to earn a $10 million bonus.

It was his 61st PGA Tour title and fourth in five starts.

Woods, who led the money list with $10,867,052 at the end of the regular season, first won the Player of the Year award in 1997.

He followed up in 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005 and 2006. Mark O'Meara earned the award in 1998 and Fijian Vijay Singh in 2004.

Presidents Cup

Woods will be at the forefront of the American campaign in the Presidents Cup, and team skipper Jack Nicklaus has finally come up with a solution to figure out who to pair with the world's most dominant player.

Let Woods decide.

Nicklaus has given up trying to find the perfect match for Woods after three Presidents Cups and he will leave it to the golfer to choose his partner.

Finding someone to play alongside the world's best player would on the surface appear easy but some of golf's greatest thinkers have been unable to unlock the mystery behind Woods's mediocre record in team competition.

While few would relish their chances going head-to-head against Woods, who is 6-2-1 in singles play at the Presidents and Ryder Cup, the 31-year-old's record in fourball and foursomes does not strike the usual fear into his opponents.

His Presidents Cup record certainly does not reflect his status as perhaps the greatest player ever to have picked up a golf club, posting a mark of 10-9-1 over four events. In five Ryder Cups his 10-13-1 record is even less impressive.

"Tiger's record in fourball is not particularly good," Nicklaus said. "I think he won a match in Washington and we almost gave him a party." *Reuters*

5-man group starts search for new commish

Game on Oct. 14 (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:30 p.m.—Opening Ceremonies
6:30 p.m.—San Miguel vs Air21

By Musong R. Castillo

MACAU—THE SEARCH FOR THE NEW commissioner officially started here Wednesday when the league's board finalized the five-man committee that will come up with the criteria of qualifications for candidates of the vital PBA post.

Air21's Lito Alvarez and ex-chair Ricky Vargas of Talk 'N Text will join chair Tony Chua of Red Bull, vice chair Joaqui Trillo of Alaska and treasurer Robert Non of Ginebra in the committee which starts meeting next week.

Chua, Trillo and Non were automatic choices as members of the board's executive committee.

"The first order of business for the committee is to lay down the main criteria which we will use in choosing our next permanent commissioner," Chua announced.

"Of course, we don't want to monopolize that process so we will also ask the other member governors for their own input or suggestions on what criteria we will be using. However, the committee will have the final say."

The committee will then present the criteria to the board before all members come up with a list of candidates that will take over from officer-in-charge Renauld "Sonny" Barrios after the Philippine Cup.

Barrios was named OIC after Noli Eala resigned two months ago. Eala completed five seasons with the PBA before he stepped down.

The board had also approved the use of new rules starting with the Philippine Cup which starts on Oct. 14 at the Araneta Coliseum with San Miguel and Air21 clashing after a techno-inspired opening rites slated at 4:30 p.m.

To encourage explosive scoring, the three-point area has been shortened to 20 feet from 22, the shaded lane is now trapezoidal in shape from rectangular and a certain level of hand-checking will now be allowed.

We want the fans to have what they want, and that is fast-paced, high-scoring basketball," Chua said.

The board flew to this gambling capital on Tuesday to set the league course for the next two years.

Celtics hope to bond via Europe trip

LONDON—A NOT-SO RELAXING TRIP TO Europe is the perfect opportunity for Boston Celtics star Paul Pierce to get to know new teammates Kevin Garnett and Ray Allen.

The Celtics, who won the last of their 16 NBA titles in 1986, signed the pair over the summer to add scoring punch to a team that finished with a 24-58 record last year, the second worst in the league.

This year, with training camp to open Sunday in Rome ahead of preseason games in the Italian capital and London, Pierce is looking to return the Celtics to the top.

"Expectations around here are for a championship," the five-time All-Star said Tuesday during a conference call.

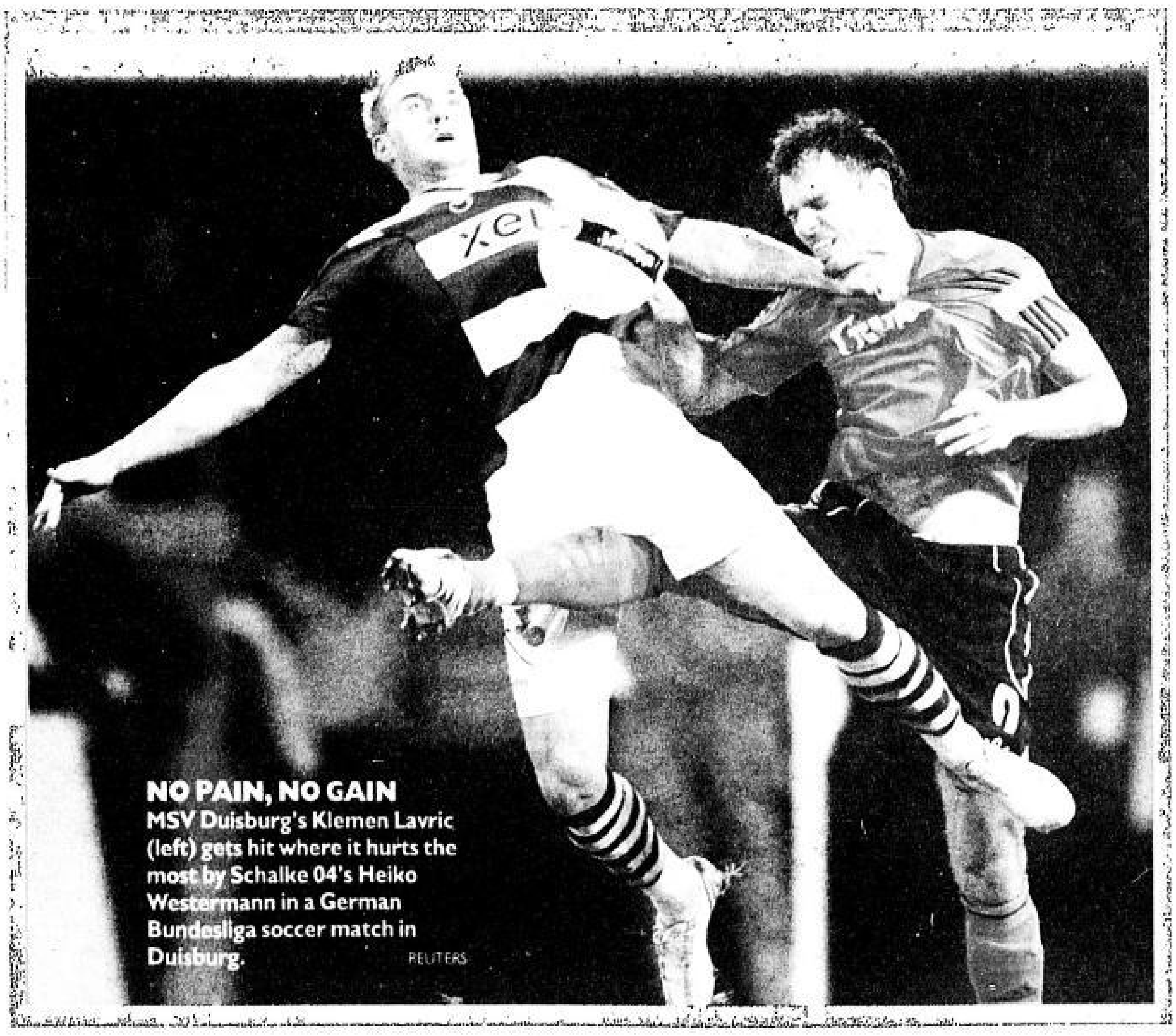
Talking about winning the NBA title before they've even played together may be a stretch, but Pierce is hoping the six-day training camp and two games in Europe will give the Celts some cohesiveness before the regular season.

"Just try to find a foundation, but also chemistry," Pierce said. "Get a feel for one another on and off the court."

The Celtics, who have won only three playoff series in Pierce's nine years with the team, will face the Toronto Raptors on Oct. 6 in Rome, and then play the Minnesota Timberwolves four days later in London.

Garnett, a former MVP and 10-time All-Star, went to the Celtics from the Timberwolves in a 7-for-1 deal—the NBA's biggest trade for one player. *AP*

WITH no preseason games scheduled yet, Cleveland Cavaliers star LeBron James takes time out to pose with tennis bombshell Maria Sharapova for a United Nations Development Program campaign. REUTERS



NO PAIN, NO GAIN
MSV Duisburg's Klemen Lavric (left) gets hit where it hurts the most by Schalke 04's Heiko Westermann in a German Bundesliga soccer match in Duisburg. REUTERS

Yankees playoff bid stalled anew

BOSTON—MANNY RAMIREZ REturned to the Boston lineup and went 1-for-2 with a walk as the Red Sox cut their magic number to clinch the American League East title to four with a 7-3 victory over Oakland on Tuesday.

Boston also benefited from New York's 7-6, 10-inning loss to Tampa Bay.

After being sidelined for 24 games by a strained muscle in his left side, Ramirez singled and scored Boston's first run in the first inning, then walked to start a two-run fifth.

Curt Schilling also had plenty of rest and it paid off with his first win since Aug. 24.

Pitching for the first time in nine days so manager Terry Francona could arrange his rotation for the playoffs, Schilling (9-8) allowed one run and six hits and left after six innings with a 3-1 lead.

The Red Sox, who had lost six of nine, entered the game with a two-game lead in the division over New York. With five games left, the Red Sox had already clinched a wild-card berth.

The only run Schilling allowed was Daric Barton's third homer of the season in the first.

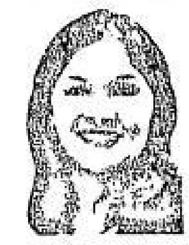
At St. Petersburg, Florida, Jorge Velandia hit a grand slam for his first career homer and Dioner Navarro added a solo shot in the 10th inning as Tampa Bay prevented New York from clinching a playoff berth.

Coupled with Boston's victory over Oakland, New York fell three games behind the first-place Red Sox in the AL East with five games to play. The Yankees lead Detroit by 4 1/2 games in the wild-card race, and their magic number to clinch a playoff berth for the 13th consecutive year remained at one.

Velandia's grand slam off Brian Bruney finished a six-run sixth and offset a grand slam by Alex Rodriguez that gave New York a 5-0 lead in the third. Navarro hit the winner on a 2-0 pitch from Jeff Karstens (1-4). *AP*

Impromptu board meeting in airport

IN HUDDLE



Beth Celis

MACAU—THE first directional board meeting of the PBA under new chair Tony Chua of Red Bull was supposed to be held here Sept. 26 and 27, but it started a day earlier in Manila in a most unlikely venue—the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

It was Talk 'N Text governor Ricky Vargas who requested that the meeting be held, since he was leaving for New York Wednesday to join the entourage of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Ricky was scheduled to make a presentation to world leaders, with aim of attracting foreign investors to the Philippines.

Not wanting to waste anytime, Ricky urged the chair if they could convene the board informally while awaiting their flight at the NAIA.

The chairman said yes.

I don't know if the group continued the talks even aboard flight 851 en route to Macau, but I know that they immediately proceeded to the newly constructed ultra posh Venetian Hotel—site of the board meeting—as soon as we arrived in Macau.

I was told that the Macau Venetian is twice the size of the original in Las Vegas and that it will take more than a day to tour the entire place.

"This is where the NBA game between the Cleveland Cavaliers and the Orlando Magic will be played," said Purefoods governor Rene "Mang Pards" Pardo, who explained that a 15,000-seat capacity gym called "The Venetian Arena" was built inside the Venetian Complex.

"Tha's how big it is," said San Miguel governor Ely Capacio, admitting that he got very tired after touring a part of the complex. Ricky said he was having a little difficulty focusing on that task at hand with the New York assignment occupying his thoughts.

***

At the NAIA, chairman Tony made a mental roll call.

Two teams had earlier excused themselves—Coca-Cola and Sta Lucia. Coke governor JB Baylon begged off because of an emergency business concern while Realtors governor and team manager Buddy Encarnado and his alternate, lawyer Ariel Magno, were in Boston with the players who were attending a basketball camp.

In addition to Tony, Ricky, Ely, and Mang Pards, also present were Robert Non of Ginebra, Lito Alvarez of Air 21, Joaqui Trillo of Alaska, Mamerto Mondragon of Welcoat, league OIC Sonny Barrios, finance manager Jimmy Sunglao, operations director Rickie Santos, legal counsel Melvin Mendoza and media bureau officers Willy Martial and Dave Coros.

***

By noon of Sept. 26, every item on the agenda had been tackled by the board. It agreed to hire Sycip, Gorres and Velayo to study the pros and cons of changing the PBA to a corporation, it formed a selection committee for the choice of a commissioner, it approved the new rules and the budget for coming season, and it reviewed the league's receivables among many other things.

"We started early. We finished early," said Robert Non. "It was a marathon meeting."

***

Hoopvine: Mang Pards is very happy over the acquisition of amateur free agent Chico Lanete, who he said is a prized find. Mang Pards credits the discovery to the diligent scouting of coaches Ryan Gregorio and Ronnie Magsanoc.

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RP slips in competitive poll

WB: Local environment less business-friendly

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES HAS failed to make itself a better place for businesses, slipping eight notches to 133rd out of 178 economies surveyed by the World Bank.

Last year, the country ranked 126th in the World Bank's global competitiveness survey, where the institution annually assesses the ease of doing business in a particular economy.

The government last year launched a high-profile attempt to address the very problems affecting the country, as mentioned in the World Bank's 2006 survey.

But the government apparently failed to implement reforms that could ease the process of doing business here. As a result, the country was outstripped by Indonesia, which used to tail the Philippines in the past.

This year, Indonesia ranked 123rd, rising from last year's 135th. At the top of the list for the second straight year is Singapore, while Asia's richest economy, Japan occupies 12th place.

The results of the survey appeared in "Doing Business 2008"—a joint research project of the World Bank and its private sector lending arm International Finance Corp.

Regulations affecting 10 stages of a business life are measured from the perspective of the entrepreneur. The stages are: Starting a business, dealing with licenses, employing workers, registering property, getting credit, protecting investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts and closing a business.

According to the survey, the Philippines is lagging behind other Asian markets, including India (120th) and China (83th) whose phenomenal growth has made Asia the fastest growing region in the world.

The country also scored poorly against other Asian nations, including Bangladesh (107th), Vietnam (91th), Malaysia (24th), Thailand (15th), Hong Kong (4th), Taiwan (50th), Pakistan (76th) and Sri Lanka

RP SLIPS/ B5

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INDICATORS

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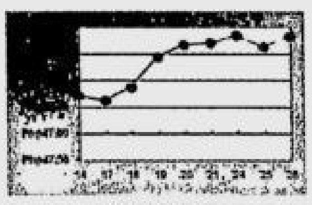


SEPTEMBER

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 45.17 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Sept. 26, 2007

STOCK MARKET

Shares up 1.0%

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY closed 1.0 percent higher on thin volume as investors remained cautious, dealers said. They said the market was supported by strong buying among blue chips led by telecom giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

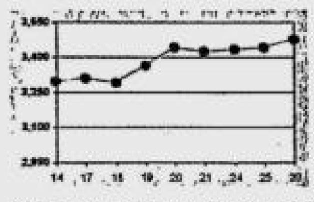
The composite index gained 35.08 points to close at 3,475.75, off a high of 3,491.65 and a low of 3,449.64. The broader all-share index added 9.10 points to 2,162.99.

Losers led gainers 65 to 44, while 59 stocks ended flat.

SHARES/ B5

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

SEPTEMBER



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Gov't to shoulder NFA's rice import expenses in 2008

By Amy R. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT next year will shoulder the 50-percent tariff imposed on all rice shipments to be ordered by the cash-strapped National Food Authority, to help curb the agency's losses.

"According to the Finance department, the NFA will be given a tax expenditure subsidy, enough to cover its total rice import tariffs," said NFA Administrator Jessup P. Navarro.

He explained that the supposed tariff to be slapped on rice imports would be appropriated in the government budget.

In effect, the NFA will have to pay the tariffs on the imports using available funds under the Tax Expenditure Fund, which is part of the annual budget.

Navarro added that the plan has already been approved in principle during a recent meeting of the country's economic managers.

If this was implemented this year, Navarro said the move would translate to some P14 billion in savings.

For 2007, the NFA has imported some 1.6 million metric tons of rice, mostly from Vietnam. The last batch of rice imports of 260,000 metric tons is set to arrive by October at the latest.

Navarro, however, did not disclose the planned rice importation volume for next year.

He said the full subsidy will cut down the agency's losses. The NFA is still waiting for a sovereign guarantee from the government.

According to Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap, he expects to re-

GOV'T TO/ B5

RP miners dig hard

A WORKER retrieves a sack of ore at a mineral site in Mt. Diwalwal, Monkayo, Compostela Valley. For mining firms, community relations have become vital to their business. INQUIRER PHOTO

MINING IN THE PHILIPPINES DOESN'T just require hard hats and heavy machinery, it also involves good manners and lots of talking.

Albert Eacott, the safety manager for OceanaGold's gold and copper project in Didipio valley, assiduously waves to workers building an all-weather road en route to the future mine site.

"It's all about respect," he says.

OceanaGold and a host of companies before it have worked hard to win locals around to the idea of mining in Didipio, where subsistence farmers have a long tradition of panning for gold.

All mining firms now pay attention to community relations but in the Philippines, it's a business necessity.

The sector's poor environmental record and its failure to share profits during the local industry's heyday in the 1960s and 1970s have left people deeply distrustful of large-scale miners and tripped up government efforts to attract mining investments.

Companies wishing to explore the archipelago's vast mineral reserves often meet fierce and well-organized opposition from local nongovernment organizations and leftist groups, who mount legal campaigns, lobby the community and, in some cases, try to obstruct operations through demonstrations.

The Catholic Church, which is a powerful political player in the country, supports the

RP MINERS / B2

Public sector posts surplus

By Michelle V. Remo

WITH THE FISCAL turnaround of state-owned firms, the entire public sector posted a budget surplus of P24 billion in the first half, up 79 percent from that of the same period last year.

The surplus was equivalent to 0.8 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) in January to June this year, better than the 0.5 percent recorded in the first half of 2006.

Public sector is composed of the national government, government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs), government financial institutions (GFIs) and social security institutions (SSIs).

Data from the Department of Finance showed that the public sector surplus in the first half was influenced by the P32.685 billion in combined surplus of major GOCCs, which include, among others, the power firms National Power Corp. and National Transmission Corp.

The improvement in the fiscal position of GOCCs followed the directive from the Department of Finance to fix their financial problems. The DOF has required GOCCs to implement a scorecard system whereby officials and employees of GOCCs would be given incentives or penalties depending on their ability to achieve their financial targets.

The public sector's financial position was, however, partly dragged down by the P40.98-billion budget deficit of the national government.

The first-half deficit of the national government was higher than the P31.504 billion recorded in the same period last year, and higher than the supposed ceiling of P31.283 billion stated under the fiscal program.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas also posted a deficit, which hit P31.473 billion.

This was a stark reversal of the P11.259 billion in surplus registered by the BSP in the first half of 2006.

It may be recalled that, since May, the BSP moved to mop up excess liquidity in the system by inviting state-owned firms and trust departments of banks to park their deposits with the central bank.

The BSP's expenditures consequently increased, as interest rates offered under the special depository accounts for GOCCs are higher than regular yields.

To ensure that the peso does not fluctuate substantially, the BSP likewise has intervened by buying or selling dollars or pesos. This is to prevent either an abrupt and significant appreciation or depreciation of the peso.

Earlier reports said the BSP had to intervene to avoid a depreciation of the peso at the height of the US subprime market concerns and too much appreciation

PUBLIC/ B5

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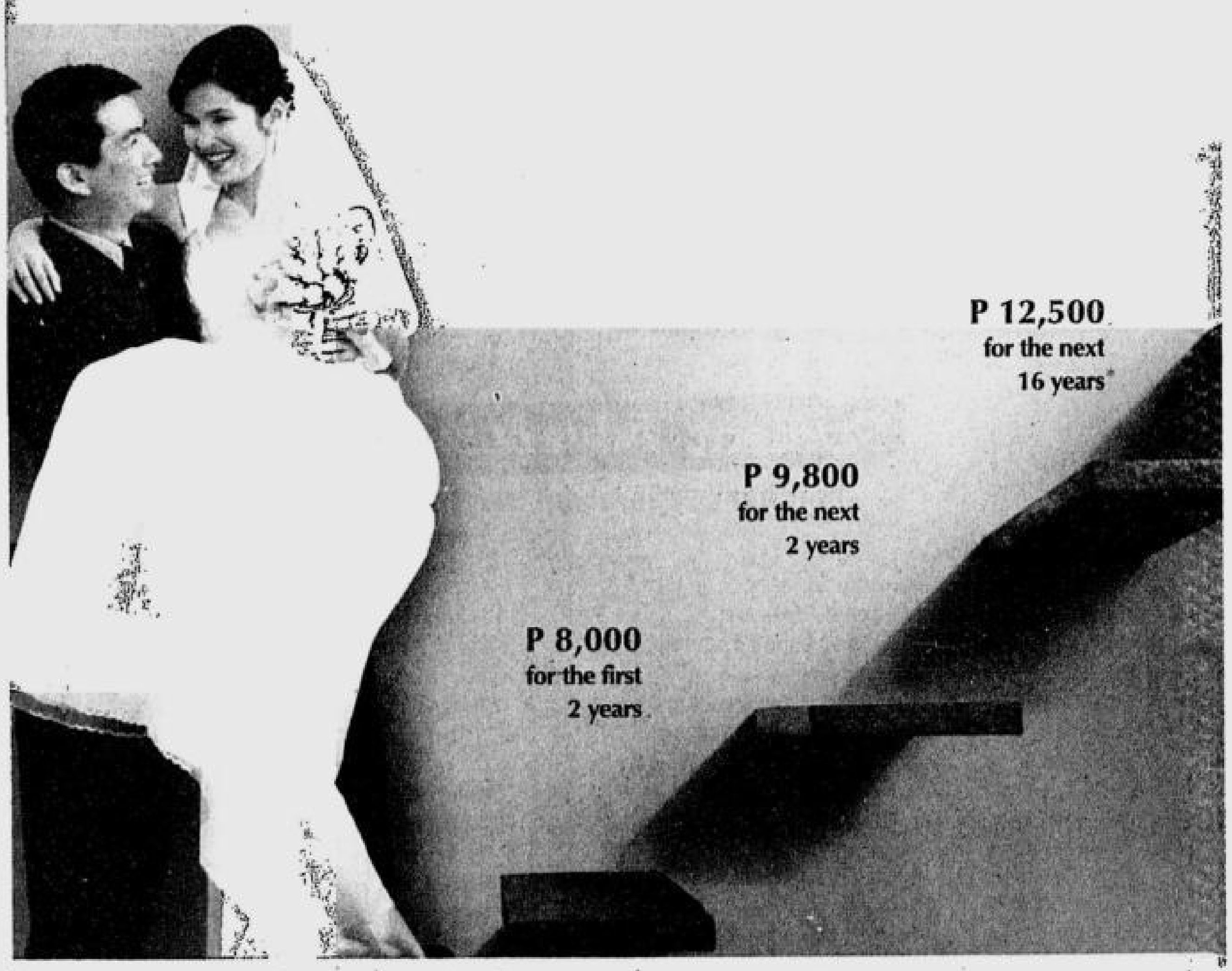

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US gaming firm to infuse P5B into Poro Point

Area to rival Phuket, Bali

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A CALIFORNIA-BASED GAMing and property developer has earmarked P5 billion for investments in the Poro Point freeport zone in La Union over the next five years to turn the area "into a travel destination that can compete with Phuket and Bali."

An official from Thunderbird Resorts Inc. said the initial phase of developing a 65-hectare leisure and entertainment complex in Poro Point was ongoing and was expected to be finished by yearend.

Fernando Santico, the firm's head consultant on real estate, said the initial phase which would cost about P1 billion had so far created 400 jobs in Poro Point, bringing its total workforce in the Philippines to more than one thousand.

An international property developer of dynamic, themed, and integrated luxury hotel venues, Thunderbird Resorts Inc.'s first project in the country—called Fiesta Resort Casino Manila—opened in Binangonan, Rizal, in April 2005.

"Thunderbird expects employment numbers to grow to 2,000 in the next two years, with an additional 200 to 250 employees manning (the firm's) hotel and golf operations at Poro Point by yearend," Santico said.

He said that, in the company's aim of developing a viable prime tourist drawer in La Union, Thunderbird was banking on the growing domestic and international markets seeking more and more sophisticated business and leisure offerings.

"We walk the extra mile to transform this once-isolated US military air station into (a facility) where guests can experience the 'lifestyle of the rich and famous,'" Santico said.

He said the La Union complex—which would be called Fiesta Resort Casino Poro Point—would have 36 rooms that would be initially made available to guests at a rack rate of $180 a night.

Thunderbird also plans to develop a nine-hole, all-weather golf course set for opening in December.

He said Thunderbird's Poro Point project would also include a retail district, an infinity pool overlooking the beach, spa facilities, convention and event centers, and a water sports complex.

A different kind of advocacy

MindanaWorld

Joji Ilagan-Bian

WHEREVER I GO, PEOPLE IDENTIFY ME as an advocate for Mindanao, pushing for the development and economic growth of this island. As I move around, I exert extra effort to put into the consciousness of the people I meet the opportunities that abound in the region—in tourism, exports, human resource, information technology, and education and training

However, it is only now that I realize that my 75-year-old mother, Ma. Celina Javellana Ilagan, who passed away on Sept. 12, 2007 due to lung cancer, was a strong advocate herself, pursuing a different kind of advocacy and touching lives along the way.

My achievements in business and other concerns were nothing compared to what she had done in her lifetime. I know she would always be remembered by the multitudes of people who had met her.

My mother started propagating the devotion to the Divine Mercy and the Three O' Clock habit in 1989 with a handful of her close friends in Davao City. Their mission was to spread the devotion in all the parishes in the city in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

I recall my mother telling me that the devotion to the Divine Mercy is a total commitment to God—it is a covenant of mercy.

"Jesus, I trust in You," is in every lips of a Divine Mercy devotee. All of these devotees simultaneously recites the prayer every 3 o'clock in the afternoon wherever they are.

These group of housewives with very little business sense and no background on organizational dynamics suddenly took a stock of what they were doing and the spiritual impact on the communities they had visited. It dawned upon them that they now have to take a serious look at what they want to achieve so they can maximize both their physical and financial resources. There has to be a more methodological way of spreading the devotion.

Just like in any advocacy, one has to be prepared with information materials so that one can generate more supporters and stakeholders who will be your ally and partner in spreading the advocacy. In business, we get as many chambers of commerce and other related groups to understand and appreciate our advocacy so that they will push the reform agenda. For the business groups to support the advocacy, you have to convince them of the economic impact of that advocacy—how it will positively affect business and trade in their community—that in the end, business will be brisk and profits will increase.

My mom and her group pooled in their resources and with the help of many of their friends printed thousands and thousands of Divine Mercy pictures, novenas, pamphlets, reading materials and distributed them massively for free all over the island. They spoke to as many groups as possible to explain the devotion and other related matters.

My mom was a very effective spiritual advocate. I recall that she was a lot busier than anyone of us and to think that she was not involved in running any of our business actively. She went beyond simply spreading the advocacy among the city's parishes; she went to many cities and towns all over Mindanao, in her desire to cover more areas and bring in more devotees to the Divine Mercy. This resulted in the formation of Divine Mercy Apostolates in the southern part of Mindanao (Davao, Digos, Tafum, Mati, General Santos); Northern Mindanao (Cagayan, Malaybalay, Bukidnon, Ozamis); Western Mindanao (Dipolog, Zamboanga, Pagadian, Basilan, Jolo-Sulu); Caraga area (Butuan, Surigao, Tandag), Central Mindanao (Cotabato, Kidapawan), and Cebu City.

It was on May 20-22, 2003 that my mother and the Mindanao Divine Mercy Apostolate organized the 1st Mindanao Divine Mercy Congress in Davao City. It was supported by Msgr. Fernando Capalla, the Archbishop of Davao and Msgr. Josefino Ramirez, national spiritual director of the Divine Mercy Apostolate. The vision of the congress was to foster closer relationship among members all over the island and to forge stronger bond of spiritual commitment in the propagation of the devotion.

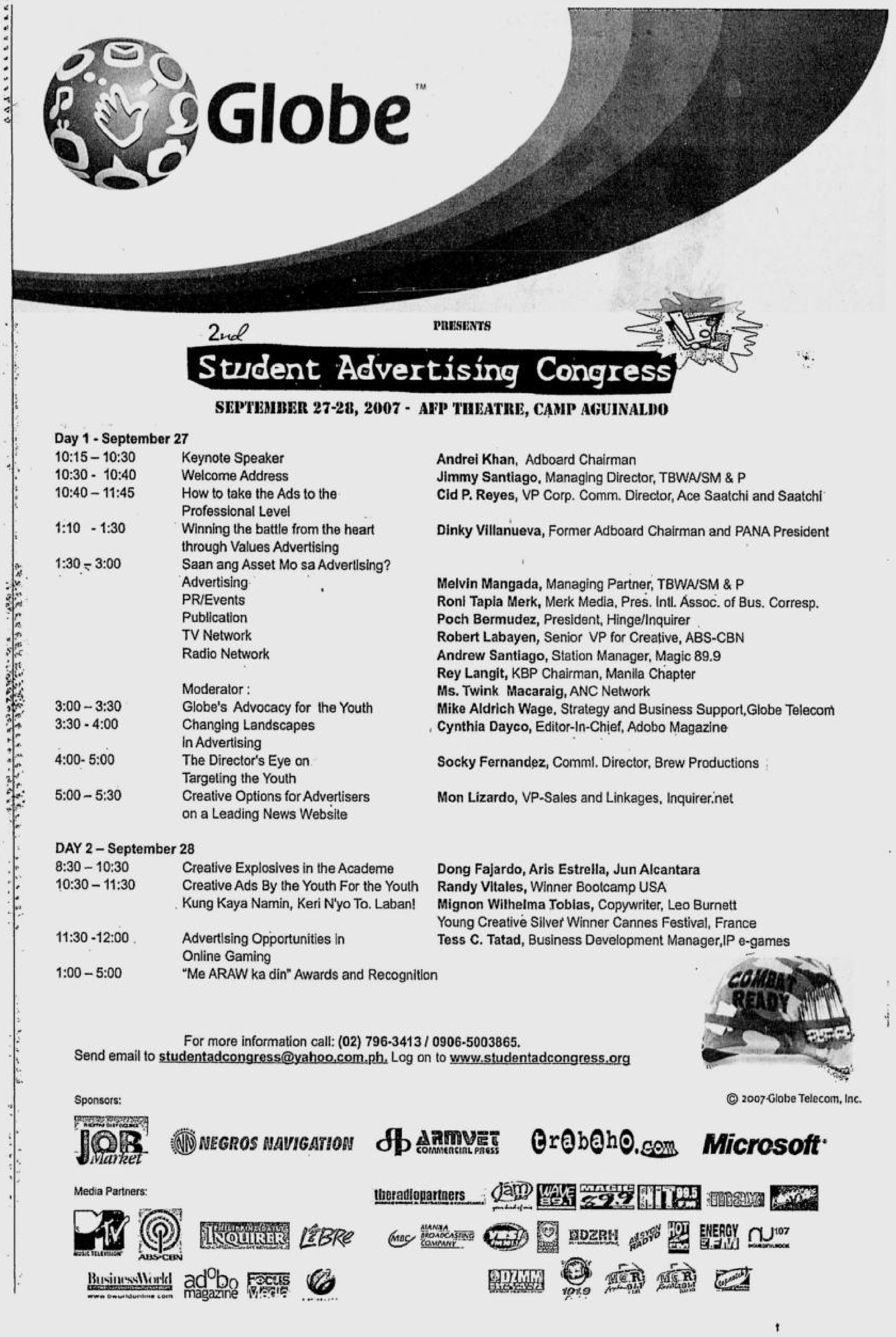
Streams of people from all walks of life all over Mindanao came to pay their last respects to my mother, each one has a story to tell on how she had touched his/her life. Bishops and priests came as a sign of their love for her. During her burial on Sept 21, 2007, three bishops—Msgr. Fernando Capalla, Bishop Rimando and Bishop Alo—and 12 priests concelebrated the Mass that was attended by more than 600 people from all over Mindanao.

Through my mother , I had the wonderful opportunity to meet all of these devotees. Their deep involvement and commitment in spreading the mercy of God struck me as one that can only be blessed by God. The 60- and 70-year-old ladies that I had met have the stamina of a 20-year-old woman, always full of energy when they move around in line with their mission—all for the love of the Lord of Mercy.

Truly, my mother's advocacy was an eye opener to me. It made me realize that in the end, her accomplishments—through her advocacy in bringing people closer to the Lord—were a thousand-fold more meaningful than any of the business and economic advocacy that I had done and that the best part was that , the rewards are in heaven.

Note: I would like to thank our friends for their prayers and condolences, the different churches and parishes for the hourly prayer services, the priests who celebrated the daily masses, the Divine Mercy Apostolate members all over Mindanao, and Nilo Paurom for the PDI obituary.

(Joji Ilagan Bian is an advocate for the development of Mindanao and chair of Joji Ilagan Foundation. Email comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com)



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Day 1 - September 27

10:15 – 10:30	Keynote Speaker	**Andrei Khan**, Adboard Chairman
10:30 - 10:40	Welcome Address	**Jimmy Santiago**, Managing Director, TBWA/SM & P
10:40 – 11:45	How to take the Ads to the Professional Level	**Cid P. Reyes**, VP Corp. Comm. Director, Ace Saatchi and Saatchi
1:10 - 1:30	Winning the battle from the heart through Values Advertising	**Dinky Villanueva**, Former Adboard Chairman and PANA President
1:30 - 3:00	Saan ang Asset Mo sa Advertising?	
	Advertising	**Melvin Mangada**, Managing Partner, TBWA/SM & P
	PR/Events	**Roni Tapia Merk**, Merk Media, Pres. Intl. Assoc. of Bus. Corresp.
	Publication	**Poch Bermudez**, President, Hinge/Inquirer
	TV Network	**Robert Labayen**, Senior VP for Creative, ABS-CBN
	Radio Network	**Andrew Santiago**, Station Manager, Magic 89.9 **Rey Langit**, KBP Chairman, Manila Chapter
	Moderator :	**Ms. Twink Macaraig**, ANC Network
3:00 – 3:30	Globe's Advocacy for the Youth	**Mike Aldrich Wage**, Strategy and Business Support,Globe Telecom
3:30 - 4:00	Changing Landscapes In Advertising	**Cynthia Dayco**, Editor-In-Chief, Adobo Magazine
4:00- 5:00	The Director's Eye on Targeting the Youth	**Socky Fernandez**, Comml. Director, Brew Productions
5:00 – 5:30	Creative Options for Advertisers on a Leading News Website	**Mon Lizardo**, VP-Sales and Linkages, Inquirer.net

DAY 2 – September 28

8:30 – 10:30	Creative Explosives in the Academe	**Dong Fajardo, Aris Estrella, Jun Alcantara**
10:30 – 11:30	Creative Ads By the Youth For the Youth Kung Kaya Namin, Keri N'yo To. Laban!	**Randy Vitales**, Winner Bootcamp USA **Mignon Wilhelma Tobias**, Copywriter, Leo Burnett Young Creative Silver Winner Cannes Festival, France
11:30 -12:00	Advertising Opportunities in Online Gaming	**Tess C. Tatad**, Business Development Manager,IP e-games
1:00 – 5:00	"Me ARAW ka din" Awards and Recognition	

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RP miners dig hard

From page B1

anti-mining campaigns and last year forced the government to review its investor friendly mining law.

The uncertainty slashed foreign funding into the sector to $109 million last year from $447 million in 2005, a fraction of the $6.5 billion Manila wants to attract.

The government, which estimates the Philippines has $1 trillion worth of mineral wealth—nearly 10 times its $108-billion national debt—is back actively promoting mining but major players are not splashing out and individual bishops have remained vocally opposed to miners entering their patches.

Tribal power

"You come to think of it as you sit down after the day is over and say is it worth all of this?" said Joey Ayson, country manager for Royalco, the local exploration arm of Oxiana AX, an Australian mining group.

Royalco is trying to explore an area southwest of OceanaGold's Didipio project but has been unable to get its equipment in place because groups have barricaded the access road.

"Whatever you say, they say no to mining, no to exploration, they won't even listen to you or give a reason. They just say no," said Ayson.

Like many other mineral-rich areas in the Philippines, the Royalco site is on the ancestral lands of indigenous people.

By law, miners have to get permission from the tribes before they can explore and extract. A royalty must also be paid.

The permission process can be torturous and complicated by rival land claims and intratribal quarrels.

After months of negotiations, the Bugkalot tribe gave Royalco permission to explore in return for a trust fund of P150,000 for development projects and promises to rehabilitate the access road to the site.

The company also agreed to employ some of the elders and pay them P3,000-P4,000 per month.

Local nongovernment groups opposed to the agreement call it bribery.

"Those favoring the mines have admitted that they are only after the roads," said Bernabe Almirol of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement.

Spills and toxins

Much of the current opposition to mining in the Philippines stems from past experience.

In 1996, more than 1 million tons of toxic sludge from a mine owned by Marcopper Mining Corp. spilled into a river on the central island of Marinduque contaminating the water and forcing hundreds to flee their homes. The disaster stalled Manila's efforts to liberalize the industry for most of the following decade.

In 2005, cyanide spills at a gold, copper and zinc mine belonging to Australia's Lafayette on the central island of Rapu-Rapu set back another attempt to revive the industry.

"We are not against mining per se but we have yet to see responsible mining. Rapu-Rapu was the showcase but they blew it," said Sister Eden Orlino, who opposes Royalco and OceanaGold and would rather see the government promote agriculture and eco-tourism.

"We need to demonstrate that things like that will no longer happen," said Jake Foronda, general manager of OceanaGold's Didipio site.

During exploration, Didipio attracted opposition from the Church, NGOs and farmers but now that preparations are afoot for mining to start in 2009, more of the locals are being won over.

"People see the road being built, they see the improvements, the employment and the anti-mining sentiment is gradually decreasing," said Foronda.

OceanaGold plans four years of open-pit mining followed by at least 11 years of underground operations. Dinkidi Hill, which overlooks the valley, will disappear along with dozens of wooden homes nestled below it.

Most of the residents live hand to mouth and many were happy to accept OceanaGold's offer of relocation along with an education grant for children and job offers for the adults.

Farmers have been offered up to P250,000 per hectare.

The company says some of the land surrounding the mine can be returned to the owners and used for agriculture once the ore has been extracted. If not, they double the price paid for it. *Reuters*

Medical transcription revenues to double yearly

Companies step up efforts to expand market in US

By Ronnel W. Domingo

REVENUES FROM THE OUTsourced medical transcription service sector is seen to grow by 90 percent yearly in the next five years from $75 million in 2006, as companies launch a campaign to expand their market in the United States.

Based on such growth rates, the domestic medication transcription industry would outpace growth in the high-profile contact center industry, according to the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (Citem).

Citem, which is a part of the Department of Trade and Industry, is organizing with the help of the Medical Transcription Industry Association of the Philippines Inc. (MTIAPI) a delegation to a convention and exhibition of the American Health Information Management Association to be held in Philadephia from Oct. 6 to 11, 2007.

Ahima represents some 51,000 professionals who are specially educated in health information management and employed in the US healthcare industry.

In a joint statement with Citem, MTIAPI said it sought to draw to the Philippines more companies on the lookout for quality jobs at lower cost through the Ahima convention which gathers industry decision-makers.

MTIAPI cites the following factors as drivers of increasing demand for outsourced medical transcription services:

- The rise in healthcare spending due to aging population in the US;
- The increasing demand from health maintenance organizations and medical insurance; and
- The requirement under a US law passed in 1996 for Medicare, Medicaid and US insurance companies to have all medical records archived in digital format.

"As the demand for healthcare services increases, the need for dictation and transcription of medical encounters grow 16 percent a year, resulting in an estimated $12 billion-dollar industry," MTIAPI said.

Further, the group said US healthcare entities must be apprised of the advantages of dealing with Philippine service providers, such as:

- Their operating 24 hours, 7 days a week, with the ability to deliver output in three to six hours in emergency cases;
- Their work force being composed of young professionals in their early 20s, who are proficient in the English language and familiar with Western culture; and
- The ability of the average transcriptionist to process 1,000 lines daily with 98 to 99 percent accuracy.

Rates for Meralco industrial users to drop

By Abigail L. Ho

POWER USERS IN 10 INDUSTRIAL ESTATES and three economic zones within the Manila Electric Co. franchise will soon pay less for electricity, following the Energy Regulatory Commission's order to implement special rates for these areas.

ERC chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. said that even if Meralco and the National Power Corp. have yet to formally file their agreement on preferential rates with the regulatory body, the reduction could already be implemented.

"I just signed an order regarding that," he told reporters. "We'll just wait for their filing, but they can already start (offering those lower rates)."

Asked to confirm this, Meralco president and CEO Jesus Francisco said the distribution utility had indeed sent a letter to the ERC, seeking approval for the new rates prior to the actual filing of the petition.

"We just wrote a letter (to the ERC), with the formal filing to follow," he said in a separate interview. "The chairman has already replied, so we can implement [it] already."

From almost P5 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) in recent months, ecozone locators will enjoy a reduced generation rate of only P3.52 per kWh, under the Meralco-Napocor agreement.

Napocor will provide up to 2,500 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of power at this reduced rate each year.

"If Meralco wants more, then we're more than willing to sit down with them again," Napocor president Cyril Del Callar had earlier said. "The volume starts from 1,900 GWh to a maximum of 2,500 GWh."

Francisco said the special ecozone rate could decline further to P3.49 per kWh, and then to P3.46 per kWh, if the demand for power rises past certain levels.

While locators inside the 10 industrial estates and three ecozones within the Meralco franchise would be the initial beneficiaries of the special rate, he said this could also be extended to other entities, provided they meet certain criteria.

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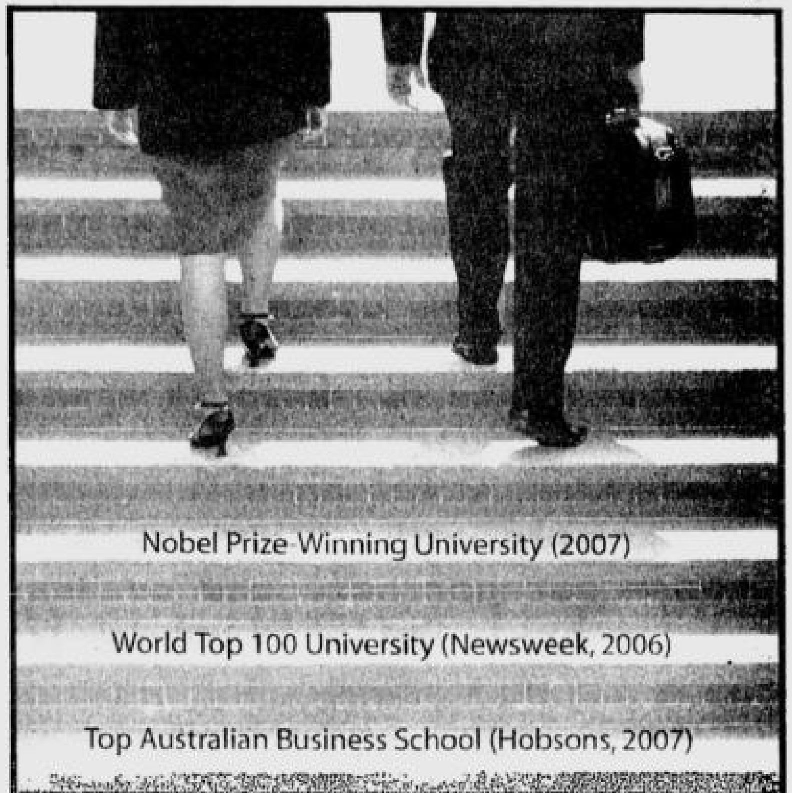
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Inflation rate seen at 2.1-2.8%

Peso strengthening helps temper rise in prices

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS expects the country's annual inflation rate to remain benign in September, as the strengthening of the peso helped temper the rise in consumer prices.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday said this month's inflation rate would likely range between 2.1 and 2.8 percent versus the 2.4 percent rate posted in August.

"While prices of major food items such as rice and fuel rose during the month, prices of fresh food items declined and the peso remained generally firm," Tetangco said.

Inflation measures the rise in average prices of basic goods based on an index or basket of products consumed by a typical Filipino household.

"Overall, the inflation environment continues to be favorable," Tetangco said.

The benign inflation environment, along with the sharper than expected cut in the US Federal Reserve's benchmark rate last week, gives the BSP leeway to ease its interest rates.

Tetangco said the Fed decision gave the BSP "some room for maneuvering."

Several players in the the local financial market are now expecting the BSP to cut its own interest rates in the next Monetary Board meeting on Oct. 4, although this expectation could be tempered by risks coming from rising oil prices.

The BSP vowed to remain vigilant on the risks to inflation including the volatility in oil markets, the continuing risk aversion in offshore markets and as well as weather patterns.

"The Fed's action is among the factors that we consider for our policy rate setting because it provides guidance on the assessment of US growth and inflation," Tetangco said, adding that the rates would also have an impact on the portfolio preferences of global investors.

Anything affecting the US economic health also affects the Philippines because of its substantial exports to that country.

ALI, Yulos launch joint project

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PROPERTY GIANT AYALA LAND Inc. (ALI) yesterday unveiled its massive mixed-use development in Canlubang, Laguna, said to be eight times larger than the Makati central business district.

Called "Nuvali" (pronounced as New Valley), the first phase of the 1,600-hectare project will cost P3.5 billion, Miriam Katigbak, head of ALI's strategic landbank management, said yesterday after a press launch at the Ayala Museum.

Nuvali is so far ALI's largest master-planned regional hub in the country.

It is a partnership between the Yulos and ALI.

In 1993, ALI bought 70 percent of the 1,600-hectare property of the Yulos in Canlubang, with the latter retaining the 30 percent. In 1993, the property was valued at P275 per square meter, ALI president Jaime Ayala said.

The land value now was placed at P2,000 per square meter by independent property consultants.

The first phase of the project, which covers 300 hectares, will include a retail center, a multi-functional lake, a business process outsourcing (BPO) campus, campus apartments, a visitor's center, residences and Xavier School.

Officials said Nuvali would devote 50 percent of the development area to open spaces and greenery.

Of the total budget for the first phase, P2.5 billion will go to the development of infrastructure and clubhouses for ALI's three major housing brands—Ayala Land Premiere (high-end), Community Innovations Inc. (for urban achievers) and Avida (affordable segment).

As part of residential offerings in Nuvali, Ayala Land Premiere is launching "Abrio" this Friday, a cluster of 380 exclusive lots on a 70-hectare portion of the Nuvali project.

In October, Community Innovations will launch "Treveia," a 60-hectare house and lot community, which may cost roughly P9,000 to P9,500 a square meter per lot. Lot sizes may measure roughly 300 square meters each.

Also next month, Avida will launch "Avida Settings" in Nuvali, where lots are priced at P1.9 million to P3 million. The lot size is at least 120 square meters.

Omico capital hike OKd

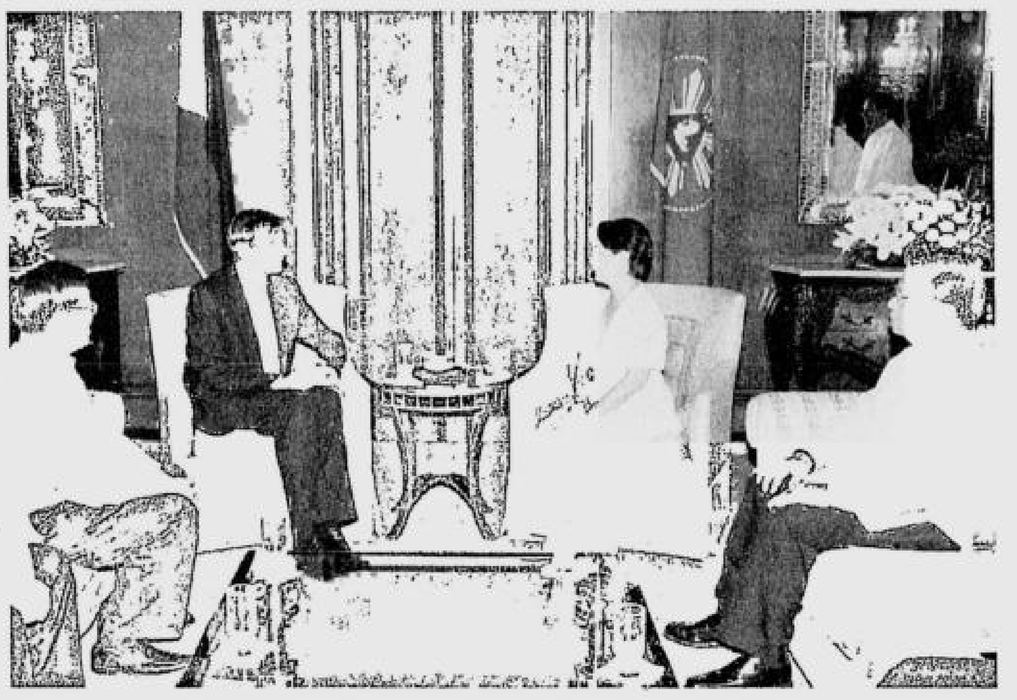
OMICO CORP. HAS received regulatory consent for its planned increase in authorized capital stock to P2 billion from P1 billion, the company said in a disclosure to the Philippines Stock Exchange yesterday.

Omico will raise its capital stock to 200 billion shares from 100 billion shares.

This is in line with the listing of new shares after the company raised fresh funds from a stock rights offer last month.

The company offered to shareholders the right to subscribe to one share for every three shares held as of the record date of Aug. 1.

The proceeds of P387.3 million will be used to fund mining exploration and acquisition of mining claims, as well as real estate development projects and working capital. Elizabeth S. Lacson



JEROEN VAN Der Veer, chief executive of Royal Dutch Shell PLC, chats with President Arroyo during a courtesy call in Malacañang. Van Der Veer's visit is an affirmation of the Philippines' part in Shell's long-term strategic interests and commitment to expand its businesses in the country. With Van Der Veer and the President are Edgar Chua, chair of Shell companies in the Philippines, and Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes.

Vitol gets 70% of service contract

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY HAS APPROVED the farm-in of Vitol GPC Investment SA in Service Contract 6A, giving the Geneva-based company a 70-percent stake in the offshore Palawan exploration contract.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Philodrill Corp. corporate secretary Adrian Arias said the entry of Vitol had altered the participating interests of the parties involved in SC 6A.

Service contract operator Philodrill's stake had been reduced from 44.43 percent to only 13.33 percent. Those held by other shareholders also went down.

PetroEnergy Resources Corp. now holds only 5 percent from 16.67 percent; Anglo Philippine Holdings Corp., 3.33 percent from 11.11 percent; Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development Corp., 2.33 percent from 7.78 percent; Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp., 2.17 percent from 7.22 percent; Forum Energy Philippines Corp., 1.67 percent from 5.56 percent; Philex Mining Corp., 1.67 percent from 5.56 percent, and Alcorn Gold Resources and Minerals Corp., 0.5 percent from 1.67 percent. Abigail L. Ho

Sterling Bank raises capital

STERLING BANK OF ASIA HAS RISEN TO become one of the top 10 thrift banks in the country with the recent increase in its capitalization to P1 billion, as against the minimum requirement of P325 million for savings banks, in just six months of operations.

Sterling Bank president Lamberto R. Villena said the additional capital infusion would fund the bank's extensive expansion program.

The bank has six branches in Metro Manila and it is planning to open nine more branches here and other key cities in the provinces before the end of the year.

"As Sterling Bank ventures on an extensive expansion program in Metro Manila and key provincial cities, we will also embark on developing innovative products that offer optimum yield and convenience for its customers," Villena added.

CURRENCIES

September 26, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.707264	1.000000	45.2940
Japan	Yen	0.006163	0.008714	0.3947
United Kingdom	Pound	1.427329	2.018100	91.4078
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.091055	0.128742	5.8312
Switzerland	Franc	0.606520	0.857559	38.8423
Canada	Dollar	0.704727	0.996413	45.1315
Singapore	Dollar	0.471634	0.666844	30.2040
Australia	Dollar	0.614478	0.868810	39.3519
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.877475	2.654562	120.2357
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.189407	0.267802	12.1298
Brunei	Dollar	0.470067	0.664628	30.1037
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000077	0.000109	0.0049
Thailand	Baht	0.022241	0.031447	1.4244
UAE	Dirham	0.192662	0.272405	12.3383
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.413900	64.0412
Korea	Won	0.000768	0.001086	0.0492
China	Yuan**	0.094162	0.133135	6.0302
Denmark	Kroner	0.134111	0.189620	8.5886
India	Rupee	0.017882	0.025284	1.1452
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.205929	0.291163	13.1879
New Zealand	Dollar	0.522660	0.738989	33.4718
Sweden	Kroner	0.108759	0.153775	6.9651
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.021465	0.030349	1.3746

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Sept. 25, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen ** Asian time closing rate as of Sept. 25, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 26, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	8.6	8.8	8.6	8.8	27,000
73	38.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	55.5	56	55	55	1,078,800
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	67	67.5	67	67	185,000
935	630	China Banking Corp.	855	860	855	860	4,160
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	2,260,000
75.5	40	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	53	54	53	53.5	2,845,400
65.5	33	Philippine National Bank	47	47	47	47	471,300
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	63	63	63	63	500
39.57	15	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	21.75	22.25	21.75	22	4,097,700
90	49.5	Security Bank Corp.	68.5	69	68.5	69	13,000
66	43.52	Union Bank of the Philippines	55	55	55	55	98,000
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.76	ATR KimEng Financial Corp	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	45,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.86	1.92	1.86	1.9	1,947,000
16.25	3.65	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.5	30,600
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.86	0.86	350,000
42	29	First Metro Investment Corp.	42	42	42	42	15,000
1,805.00	1,560.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,780.00	1,780.00	1,780.00	1,780.00	80
5	2.95	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.5	3.55	3.5	3.55	261,000
3.1	1.02	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.9	1.9	121,000
1,005.00	230	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc	775	775	760	760	36,670
2,335.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,270.00	2,270.00	2,270.00	2,270.00	100
1.94	1.3	Vantage Corp	1.54	1.54	1.52	1.52	71,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp	5.1	5.1	5	5.1	1,038,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	20,000
70	47.5	First Gen Corp.	62	62	60	60	1,339,800
92	49	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	75	75.5	75	75.5	453,200
15	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	13.75	14	13.75	14	609,300
105.45	17.27	Manila Electric Co.	82	83.5	82	82.5	1,034,500
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.1	6.1	5.9	6	81,557,000
6.5	3.9	Petron Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	254,000
14.75	6.6	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7.7	7.8	7.5	7.6	308,000
1.9	0.99	Trans-Asia Oil & Energy Dev't Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.24	889,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.1	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2	61,000
2.95	1.66	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.74	1.76	1.72	1.76	368,000
6.9	2.24	Central Azucarera de Tarlac	2.24	2.24	2.24	2.24	2,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	3,000
61	34	Jollibee Foods Corp.	53	53	52.5	52.5	35,100
0.98	0.43	RFM Corp.	0.84	0.84	0.82	0.82	740,000
3.85	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.48	2.48	2.48	2.48	40,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. "A"	59.5	60.5	59.5	60.5	11,200
88	59.5	San Miguel Corp. "B"	60.5	61	60.5	61	13,400
0.66	0.22	Swift Foods Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	20,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	9,572,300
0.55	0.26	Vitarich Corp	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	60,000
		CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.73	EEI Corp	4.3	4.35	4.2	4.25	1,433,000
9.2	4.9	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.4	8.5	8.3	8.3	3,236,000
7	1.38	Republic Cement Corp.	4	4	4	4	10,000
2	0.28	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc	1.18	1.24	1.16	1.18	23,800,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc	4.15	4.2	4.15	4.15	1,581,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp	1	1	1	1	50,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.125	Picop Resources Inc	0.43	0.43	0.41	0.42	[illegible]
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.98	A. Soriano Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.25	3.25	320,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.1	0.1	39,300,000
1.28	0.22	APC Group Inc.	0.87	0.88	0.83	0.83	19,220,000
3.6	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.95	2.95	2.9	2.95	205,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	72,700,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	14,000,000
9.7	5.1	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8	1,405,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	26,100,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.85	4.9	1,824,000
1.38	0.51	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.91	1	0.91	0.97	2,770,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.24	2.26	2.22	2.24	1,790,000
590	375	Ayala Corp.	500	510	497.5	510	340,420
15.25	7.22	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	10,500
5.8	1.22	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4	4.05	3.95	4.05	4,492,000
10.25	3.7	DMCI Holdings Inc.	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9	16,000
6.9	1.06	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	4	4	3.9	3.9	35,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.3	125,000
3.55	1.26	House of Investments Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	223,000
14.5	5.9	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	10	10	10	10	290,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.84	1.86	1.8	1.8	190,000
0.8	0.205	Medco Holdings Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
11.5	1.1	Multitech Investments Corp.	6	6.1	5.6	5.8	4,168,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9	47,000
0.215	0.01	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.18	0.19	0.175	0.19	674,260,000
1.54	0.72	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.9	0.75	0.9	2,550,000
0.75	0.18	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.45	430,000
452.5	233.05	SM Investments Corp.	365	367.5	365	367.5	3,020
2.1	1.08	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.32	1.48	1.32	1.4	35,000
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.43	0.44	0.42	0.42	33,220,000
1.06	0.59	Solid Group Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	30,000
1.6	0.9	South China Resources Inc.	1.42	1.46	1.42	1.42	132,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	18	18	18	18	9,800
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc	0.4	0.4	0.37	0.39	20,250,000
1.1	0.26	Zeus Holdings Inc	0.54	0.6	0.54	0.6	120,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.96	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.52	1.54	1.5	1.5	380,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc	8	8	7.7	7.7	26,000
19.25	11.25	Ayala Land Inc.	15.5	16.25	15.5	16	7,294,300
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	5,000
4.7	2.65	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	17,000
0.86	0.31	Crown Equities Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	70,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.48	2,960,000
0.99	0.51	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.69	0.7	0.69	0.7	5,010,000
0.47	0.05	Ever Gotesco Resources & Hold'gs Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.28	0.28	18,830,000
1.48	0.55	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.14	823,000
2.44	1.25	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.52	1.52	1.48	1.5	35,279,000
0.49	0.1	Gotesco Land Inc. "A"	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
2.9	0.9	Keppel Philippines Properties Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc	0.64	0.64	0.6	0.6	14,250,000
4.4	1.73	Megaworld Corp.	3.15	3.25	3.1	3.15	17,568,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	100,000
0.87	0.32	Philippine Realty & Holdings Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.49	1,480,000
23	12.5	Robinson Land Corp.	16.25	16.25	16	16.25	1,609,000
5.9	1.52	SM Development Corp.	4.1	4.1	4	4.05	597,000
13.5	6.64	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.25	11.5	11.25	11.25	576,900
3.25	0.98	Shang Properties Inc.	2.42	2.42	2.34	2.34	163,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.66	0.67	940,000
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	5,830,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc	4.95	5	4.9	4.95	5,211,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	16.25	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31	32.5	31	32.5	71,500
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc.	9.4	9.4	9	9.1	1,324,000
1.14	0.91	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	30,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.26	1.26	670,000
1,470.00	1,055.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,445.00	1,470.00	1,445.00	1,465.00	100,100
2,865.00	2,150.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,835.00	2,865.00	2,835.00	2,845.00	55,820
7.9	4.5	Pilipino Telephone Corp	6.8	7	6.8	7	837,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	3,400,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	1,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	8.4	8.4	8.2	8.2	526,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.032	0.032	0.03	0.03	44,800,000
29.5	8	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	15	15	15	15	4,700
2.9	1.48	Ionics Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	80,000
0.32	0.043	Island Information & Technology Inc.	0.19	0.195	0.19	0.19	33,870,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.24	1.26	89,000
0.0725	0.029	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.048	0.049	0.048	0.049	45,200,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.65	2.65	2.55	2.6	1,340,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	60,000
6.8	3.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	42,000
37.5	16.25	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	36.5	37.5	36	37	482,400
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	2	2	2	2	1,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
16.5	5	Acesite (Phils.) Hotel Corp.	7.4	9	7.4	9	37,000
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.7	6,000
0.98	0.3	Premiere Entertainment Prod Inc.	0.56	0.59	0.56	0.59	350,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc	3	3	3	3	[illegible]
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.94	Macroasia Corp.	4.7	4.7	4.55	4.55	137,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	201,000
30	10.25	Paxys Inc	12.75	12.75	12.5	12.75	259,400
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.011	0.012	310,700,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	6	6	5.8	5.9	285,000
7.7	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	6.1	6.1	5.8	5.9	68,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	15.25	15.25	14.75	15.25	1,331,800
5	1.8	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	3	3	3	3	23,000
3.1	0.5	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	2.08	2.1	2.04	2.04	43,565,000
0.37	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.36	35,170,000
0.42	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.37	12,450,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.028	0.028	0.027	0.027	124,700,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	15,000,000
30	1.2	NIHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	16.75	17.5	16.25	16.5	4,432,100
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	182,500,000
7.7	3.45	Philex Mining Corp.	7.7	7.7	7.4	7.6	7,544,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	35	35	34	34	12,900
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1	1.02	1	1.02	620,000
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.24	1.24	2,930,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp	0.38	0.39	0.36	0.37	8,600,000
0.026	0.0095	Oriental Pet. & Minerals Corp. "A"	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.024	43,600,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. & Minerals Corp. "B"	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	29,400,000
11.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.7	9.7	9.6	9.6	31,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	516,800,000

AVERAGES			VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	890.41 UP	2.27	13,959,510	382,155,885.00
Industrial	4,499.68 UP	15.37	153,398,800	948,067,025.00
Holding Firms	1,931.31 UP	18.95	920,610,940	417,611,995.00
Property	1,535.97 UP	12.40	119,120,200	310,795,040.00
Service	1,710.98 UP	27.95	134,036,920	370,647,440.00
Mining & Oil	7,189.07 DOWN	85.54	1,339,762,800	293,597,530.00
All Shares Index	2,162.99 UP	9.10		
PSEI	3,475.75 UP	35.08		
		GRAND TOTALS	2,680,889,170	2,722,874,915.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK PSE

Economic pace in Asia seen to fall

SINGAPORE—AGAINST THE backdrop of a slowing global economy, rising oil prices and prolonged turmoil in credit markets, the pace of economic growth in Asia is set to fall modestly this year and next, a Reuters quarterly poll shows.

Economists cited the region's already elevated growth rates, rising domestic demand in China and India and the leeway policymakers in the region have to ease fiscal and monetary policies as factors that could offset a major global slowdown.

Of the 12 economies surveyed in the Asia-Pacific, economists predicted that gross domestic product growth in four—Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and South Korea—would be higher in 2008 than this year.

Economic growth would be slightly lower in the rest of Asia, including Singapore, China, India, Australia and the Philippines.

That forecast comes at a time when housing markets in the United States and in parts of Europe are slumping, prompting downward revisions in estimates for US consumption and growth.

"It's not going to be catastrophic," said Bill Belchere, chief Asian economist at Macquarie Securities.

Others were less sure. Last week, Lehman Brothers cut its forecast for growth in Asia, excluding Japan, to 7.5 percent in 2008, down from an estimated 8.4 percent in 2007. Emerging Asia on average grew by 8.5 percent in 2006. *Reuters*

Oil eyes US stocks, ekes gains after sliding below $80

SINGAPORE—OIL PRICES YESTERDAY crept up after three days of losses, with traders looking toward data expected to show a further decline in United States crude stocks.

US crude for November delivery climbed 20 cents to $79.73 a barrel by 0704 GMT, while London Brent crude rose 2 cents to $77.64 a barrel.

Prices have tumbled since hitting a record high of $83.90 a barrel last Thursday, fueled by worries over a storm in the Gulf of Mexico that later fizzled, the weakening dollar, a cut in key US interest rates and a flush of speculative capital.

The safe return of nearly all US Gulf oil production following precautionary closures last week has knocked oil back below $80, but traders said confirmation of a US crude stock draw in weekly data due on Wednesday could reverse the sell-off.

"It's all up to the inventory data, if stocks continue to draw down then prices will remain bullish," said Tony Nunan, risk management executive at Mitsubishi Corp.

A Reuters poll of analysts showed US refiners probably slowed imports of crude oil last week, causing inventories to fall by 2.4 million barrels.

But distillate stocks were seen rising by 1.3 million barrels and gasoline stocks easing by only 100,000 barrels, as the seasonal drop in gasoline demand and autumn refinery maintenance offset some of the bullishness of the crude data.

US retail gasoline demand slid to a three-month low last week, as travel slowed further with the end of the summer vacation, MasterCard Advisors said on Tuesday. *Reuters*

Asia stocks hit new highs

Worries over US economic slowdown persist

TOKYO—ASIAN STOCKS touched record highs and the dollar hit another all-time low against the euro on Wednesday after more weak US economic data boosted expectations the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates again next month.

US figures on Tuesday showed consumer confidence sank unexpectedly to a near two-year low in September, while another report said the pace of existing home sales fell last month.

The data cemented the view that the US central bank will follow up last week's 50 basis point rate cut with more easing to shield the world's biggest economy from a housing slump and financial turbulence.

"You've got the tug of war between disappointing economic news and the hopes of a rate cut. Bad news is seen as good news perversely," said Eric Betts, equities strategist at Nomura Australia. "It suggests a bumpy ride ahead." The MSCI's broadest index of Asian markets outside Japan gained 0.5 percent to touch another record high and take year-to-date gains above 30 percent, while the Nikkei ended up 0.1 percent.

Australia's benchmark S&P/ASX 200 index ended flat after setting record closing highs for two sessions running.

Taiwan's market, closed on Monday and Tuesday for national holidays, jumped 1.7 percent to its highest close in nearly two months, led by gains in firms such as Taiwan Cement and China Petrochemical amid high raw material prices, while Indian shares rose past 17,000 points for first time. Hong Kong markets were closed for a holiday.

But investors shied away from technology stocks such as Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. Ltd., the world's top contract chip maker, on concerns over the US economy.

"On the tech front, some investors are pulling back, worried that the year-end peak season will not be as strong as expected due to the US credit crisis," said Cliff Chuang, a manager at Mega International Securities in Taiwan.

US Treasuries inched up in Asia in the wake of the weak US economic data, boosting Japanese government bonds.

Gold, which usually moves in the opposite direction to the dollar, rose to around $733 an ounce from $731 late in New York on Tuesday.

The dollar index against a basket of currencies edged up 0.1 percent, but remained within sight of an all-time low, struggling on the view that more US rate cuts would further erode demand for dollar-denominated assets.

The euro rose to another record high of $1.4163 on electronic trading platform EBS in early Tokyo trade as the dollar extended losses from the previous session after the weak US consumer confidence reading. *Reuters*

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In US, home sales still dropping

WASHINGTON—SALES OF existing homes in the United States, depressed by turmoil in credit markets, fell for a sixth straight month in August, pushing activity to the lowest point in five years.

The National Association of Realtors said that sales of existing single-family homes dropped by 4.3 percent in August, compared to July. Sales at a seasonally adjusted annual rate dropped to 5.5 million units, the slowest pace since August 2002.

The housing market has been battered by the steepest downturn in 16 years. Those problems were exacerbated in August by turmoil in credit markets, reflecting new worries about rising defaults in subprime mortgages.

The median price of an existing home—the point where half sold for more and half for less—edged up slightly in August to $224,500, an increase of 0.2 percent from August 2006. It marked the first year-over-year price increase after a record 12 straight months of declining prices.

However, many analysts believe that sales and prices will fall further as the housing market receives additional blows from rising default rates that are dumping more homes on an already glutted market and causing lenders to tighten standards. These factors have made it harder for potential borrowers to qualify for loans.

A separate report on housing prices in 20 large cities done by Case-Shiller showed show prices dropping a sharp 3.9 percent in July compared to July 2006. Economists said that report was probably a better reflection of the downward pressure on prices that is being exerted by record high inventory levels.

"Another month of falling sales and rising inventories tells us the housing market is still a basket case," said Joel Naroff, chief economist at Naroff Economic Advisors Inc. "It is going to take a long time to work off that imbalance and undoubtedly prices will have to fall a whole lot further." *AP*

Gov't to shoulder ...

From page B1

ceive the guarantee within the week. At present, the Agriculture department is fast-tracking the financial restructuring of its long-term loans worth P16.5 billion.

The NFA in May received the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' permission to refinance its debts.

Yap earlier said they are expecting to generate some P25 billion from the sale of zero-coupon bonds and use part of the proceeds to retire the loan.

The rest of the proceeds, he said, would be invested in warehouses, drying facilities and on the planned national grains highway.

The loans were originally structured and financed in 2003 using zero-coupon bonds. The bonds are currently used as collateral for NFA's debts.

Aside from the bond sale, Yap had cited plans of selling a third of NFA's 300 warehouses nationwide and maximizing the use of the 120-hectare Food Terminal Inc. property in Taguig City.

RP slips in ...

From page B1

(101th).

Only Cambodia and Laos—ranking 145th and 164th, respectively—are reported to be faring worse than the Philippines.

Cited as the top 10 reformers this year were Egypt, Coratia, Ghana, Macedonia, Georgia, Colombia, Saudi Arabia, Kenya, China and Bulgaria.

The Philippines scored most poorly in the criterion on closing a business, where it ranked 147th. The country was cited as one of the least efficient places in the world to handle a bankruptcy.

In starting a business, the Philippines ranks 144th, well in the bottom third.

The country also lags in the protection of investors (ranked 141th), ease of employing workers (122nd), paying taxes (126th) and enforcing a contract (113th).

The survey also showed that it takes 195 hours a year and 47 procedural steps to pay taxes here. The total tax rate is at a hefty 52.8 percent.

Former Finance undersecretary Noel Bonoan, now COO of consultancy firm KPMG Manabat Sanagustin & Co., said the latest report should be a wake-up call to the public and private sectors.

He said they should start concentrating on making it easier for entrepreneurs to do business here in the country.

"We know we're slipping. Now, we have to do something about it. Present efforts still need some improvement," Bonoan said.

Shares up ...

From page B1

Volume totaled 2.6 billion shares worth P2.8 billion ($62 million).

PLDT jumped to a record high of P2,865 in early trading before settling at P2,845, up P45.

Ayala Corp gained 10 pesos to P510. The country's largest bank, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co, added one peso to P53.50.

Mining stocks fell as prices of metals such as gold and copper dropped. Philex Mining Corp. lost 10 centavos to P7.60, while Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. was flat at P15.25. *AFP*

Public sector posts surplus

From page B1

when foreign portfolio investments were rising.

The government spent P3.19 billion in the first half to pay for maturing liabilities of the old Central Bank, and the amount was part of the deficit items in the public sector's budget standing.

A deficit of P863 million also added to the deficit items of the public sector's consolidated budget standing.

The amount consisted of adjustments to previous computations on the public sector budget.

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National Government of the Republic of the Philippines
Condensed Consolidated Financial Statements

December 31, 2006
(in thousand pesos)

Balance Sheet

Particulars	2006	2005	Increase (Decrease)	
			Amount	Percent
ASSETS				
Current Assets	1,038,939,905.24	1,054,731,922.85	(15,792,017.61)	(1.50)
Cash	192,237,482.28	194,259,684.34	(2,022,202.07)	(1.04)
Receivables	767,348,585.03	786,240,774.71	(18,892,189.68)	(2.40)
Inventories	20,040,102.49	20,950,564.76	(910,462.27)	(4.35)
Prepayments	56,495,784.95	50,531,231.96	5,964,552.99	11.80
Other Current Assets	2,817,950.48	2,749,667.06	68,283.42	2.48
Investments	720,827,443.65	699,781,572.80	21,045,870.85	3.01
Property, Plant and Equipment (net of Depreciation)	685,360,266.69	713,056,264.19	(27,695,997.49)	(3.88)
Land and Land Improvements and Leasehold Improvements	202,389,170.26	196,397,559.42	5,991,610.83	3.05
Buildings and Leasehold Improvements	113,452,303.65	119,430,851.84	(5,978,548.19)	(5.01)
Office Equipment, Furniture and Fixtures	28,188,105.39	27,528,367.61	659,737.78	2.40
Machineries and Equipment	38,173,058.78	36,523,777.03	1,649,281.75	4.52
Transportation Equipment	17,776,112.09	18,323,875.10	(547,763.01)	(2.99)
Other Property, Plant and Equipment and Leasehold Improvements	15,054,314.36	85,145,965.51	(70,091,651.15)	(82.32)
Construction-in-Progress	270,327,202.17	229,705,867.68	40,621,334.49	17.68
Other Assets	85,552,979.68	16,838,600.60	68,714,379.08 [1]	408.08
TOTAL ASSETS	2,530,680,595.26	2,484,408,360.44	46,272,234.82	1.86
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY				
Current Liabilities	239,743,980.59	212,800,800.52	26,943,180.07	12.66
Payable Accounts	199,400,172.24	179,234,362.14	20,165,810.10	11.25
Other Liability Accounts	40,343,808.35	33,566,438.38	6,777,369.97	20.19
Long-Term Liabilities	3,887,977,318.58	3,885,688,655.68	2,288,662.90	0.06
Domestic	2,178,186,812.01	2,190,550,305.34	(12,363,493.33)	(0.56)
Foreign	1,709,790,506.57	1,695,138,350.34	14,652,156.23	0.86
TOTAL LIABILITIES	4,127,721,299.17	4,098,489,456.21	29,231,842.97	0.71
Deferred Credits	39,400,201.15	50,279,714.68	(10,879,513.53)	(21.64)
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND DEFERRED CREDITS	4,167,121,500.33	4,148,769,170.88	18,352,329.44	0.44
Equity				
Government Equity *	(1,636,440,905.07)	(1,664,360,810.45)	27,919,905.38	(1.68)
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	2,530,680,595.26	2,484,408,360.44	46,272,234.82	1.86

Difference between totals and sum of components is due to rounding off.

*See details in statement below

Statement of Government Equity

Particulars	2006	2005	Increase (Decrease)	
			Amount	Percent
Government Equity, Beginning Balance	(1,664,360,810.45)	(1,626,178,519.71)	(38,182,290.74)	2.35
Retained Operating Surplus	162,429,728.89	100,637,463.57	61,792,265.31	61.40
Current Operations	119,087,945.03	19,306,938.63	99,781,006.40 [2]	516.81
Prior Years' and Other Adjustments	43,341,783.85	81,330,524.95	(37,988,741.09)	(46.71)
Transfer to Registry of Public Infrastructures	(133,580,177.21)	(137,612,233.23)	4,032,056.02	(2.93)
Transfer to Registry of Reforestation Projects	(929,646.30)	(1,207,521.08)	277,874.78	(23.01)
Government Equity, Ending Balance	(1,636,440,905.07)	(1,664,360,810.45)	27,919,905.38	(1.68)

Difference between totals and sum of components is due to rounding off.

Statement of Income and Expenses

Particulars	2006	2005	Increase (Decrease)	
			Amount	Percent
INCOME	1,007,800,132.76	838,909,832.13	168,890,300.63	20.13
Tax Revenue	850,306,689.19	695,193,423.65	155,113,265.54	22.31
General Income	157,493,443.57	143,716,408.48	13,777,035.09	9.59
Permit and Licenses	7,852,967.97	7,677,106.56	175,861.41	2.29
Service Income	53,285,287.74	48,041,209.49	5,244,078.25	10.92
Business Income	6,733,629.63	5,733,714.47	999,915.16	17.44
Other Income	89,621,558.23	82,264,377.95	7,357,180.28	8.94
LESS: OPERATING EXPENSES	437,392,129.28	391,044,143.68	46,347,985.60	11.85
Personal Services	324,945,603.81	298,939,482.54	26,006,121.27	8.70
Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses	112,446,525.47	92,104,661.14	20,341,864.33	22.09
Net Income (Loss) from Current Operations	570,408,003.47	447,865,688.45	122,542,315.02	27.36
Less: Financial Expenses	322,784,463.17	314,776,934.61	8,007,528.56	2.54
Net Income before Other Income/Expenses	247,623,540.30	133,088,753.84	114,534,786.46	86.06
Add (Deduct) Subsidy From (To)	(205,699,077.56)	(204,503,949.62)	(1,195,127.94)	0.58
National Government Agencies	(8,657,387.71)	(21,370,422.35)	12,713,034.64	(59.49)
Local Government Units	(172,134,561.57)	(157,467,368.21)	(14,667,193.35)	9.31
Government Owned and/or Controlled Corporation	(24,702,556.12)	(25,492,560.37)	790,004.25	(3.10)
NGOs/POs	(204,572.17)	(173,598.70)	(30,973.47)	17.84
Add (Deduct) Net/Gain (Loss)	77,163,482.29	90,722,134.41	(13,558,652.12)	(14.95)
Loss of Assets	(56,815.60)	(106,371.08)	49,555.48	(46.59)
Loss on Guaranty	(8,537,851.67) [3]	(14,856,856.25)	6,319,004.57	(42.53)
Gain/Loss on Foreign Exchange (FOREX)	83,219,812.43	106,590,142.90	(23,370,330.47)	(21.93)
Gain/Loss on Sale of Disposed Assets	49,243.21	(39,520.14)	88,763.36	(224.60)
Gain/Loss on Sale of Securities	2,489,093.92	(865,261.02)	3,354,354.94	(387.67)
NET INCOME (LOSS)	119,087,945.03	19,306,938.63	99,781,006.40	516.81

Difference between total and sum of components is due to rounding off.

Statement of Cash Flows

Particulars	2006	2005	Increase (Decrease)	
			Amount	Percent
Cash Flows from Operating Activities:				
Cash Inflows	1,720,830,240.98	1,503,986,031.06	216,844,209.93	14.42
Cash Outflows	1,410,726,343.79	1,294,443,702.28	116,282,641.51	8.98
Cash Provided by (Used in) Operating Activities	310,103,897.20	209,542,328.77	100,561,568.42	47.99
Cash Flows from Investing Activities:				
Cash Inflows	457,961,013.39	395,065,737.38	62,895,276.01	15.92
Cash Outflows	475,061,354.79	462,808,051.85	12,253,302.94	2.65
Cash Provided by (Used in) Investing Activities	(17,100,341.40)	(67,742,314.48)	50,641,973.08	(74.76)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities:				
Cash Inflows	1,416,783,022.96 [4]	1,609,033,255.87	(192,250,232.91)	(11.95)
Cash Outflows	1,682,631,494.21 [5]	1,687,444,463.79	(4,812,969.58)	(0.29)
Cash Provided by (Used in) Financing Activities	(265,848,471.24)	(78,411,207.91)	(187,437,263.33)	239.04
Total Cash Provided by (Used in) Operating, Investing and Financing Activities	27,155,084.55	63,388,806.39	(36,233,721.83)	(57.16)
Add: Cash Balance, Beginning	204,725,756.07 [6]	141,980,230.33	62,745,525.74	44.19
Cash Balance at the End	231,880,840.62 [7]	205,369,036.72	26,511,803.91	12.91

Difference between total and sum of components is due to rounding off.

Notes:

[1] *Other Assets ballooned into five times bigger than the 2005 level brought about by the reclassification of non-performing assets valued at P68.98 billion from "Other PPE" to " Other Assets" in conformity with NGAs policy.*

[2] *Includes total increase in revenues of ₱168.89 billion less overall increase in operating and financial expenses of P54.36 billion and net balance of subsidies and loss/gains of P14.75 billion.*

[3] *The account Loss on Guaranty as reported by DOF-BTr is used for the servicing of the loan of MRT 1 wherein DOTC is the implementing agency and for the payment of foreign exchange risk cover claims for NG guaranteed obligations.*

[4] *Includes proceeds from Domestic and Foreign Loans reported by DOF-BTr and DFA in the amount of ₱ 1,413.37 billion and ₱ 0.60 billion, respectively. The proceeds are net of discount, other financial charges and documentary stamps but inclusive of premium on bonds, accrued interest and withholding tax on discounts. Foreign loan of DFA was for the acquisition of property at Suffolk St., London.*

[5] *Includes payment of Domestic and Foreign Loans reported by DOF-BTr and DFA in the amount of ₱ 1,681.37 billion and ₱ 0.39 billion, respectively. The amount comprises loan repayments and redemptions, payment of interest net of withholding tax, commitment charges, other financial charges, servicing of relent and guaranteed loans, debt service subsidy to defunct and/or fully disposed GOCCs and loss on guaranty.*

[6] *Excludes ₱ 643.28 million cash balance per 2005 Balance Sheet of the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) which failed to submit its Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows.*

[7] *The difference of ₱ 39.64 billion in the yearend cash balance between the Balance Sheet of ₱ 192.24 billion and the Statement of Cash Flows of P231.88 billion represents Sinking Fund-Cash presented in the Balance Sheet of DOF-BTr under Investment-Sinking Fund following the NGAS Chart of Accounts.*

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS

FISCAL YEAR 2006

BALANCE SHEET

The Consolidated Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2006 of Local Governments (77 provinces, 115 cities and 1,453 municipalities), excluding barangays, showed assets of ₱427.53 billion, liabilities of ₱88.57 billion, deferred credits of ₱28.78 billion and equity of ₱310.19 billion. Financial statements of the provinces of Bohol and Agusan del Norte, cities of Cebu and Tacloban and 48 municipalities were not included for failure to submit the statements as of cut-off date. The highlights of the Local Government Units' financial condition are shown below.

1. ASSETS – ₱427.53 billion

Compared to last year's level of ₱389.98 billion, total assets of ₱427.53 billion at yearend registered an increase of ₱37.55 billion or 9.63 percent of which ₱20.11 billion was on Property, Plant and Equipment. Current Assets aggregated ₱132.96 billion or 31.10 percent of the total assets.

Top Ten Provinces, Cities and Municipalities Based on Current Assets
(In million pesos)

Province	Amount	City	Amount	Municipality	Amount
Cebu	1,541.87	Quezon	11,382.42	Biñan, Laguna	801.82
Zamboanga del Norte	1,043.74	Manila	5,326.87	Sto. Tomas, Batangas	703.65
Batangas	940.85	Makati	5,183.03	San Juan, Metro Manila	655.71
Isabela	893.20	Batangas	4,730.60	Mariveles, Bataan	647.64
Negros Occidental	867.00	Pasig	2,551.80	Pagbilao, Quezon	466.25
Laguna	848.58	Iligan	2,205.50	Cainta, Rizal	414.56
Iloilo	834.68	Zamboanga	1,932.64	Dasmariñas Cavite	342.27
Quezon	788.36	Caloocan	1,821.64	Navotas, Metro Manila	323.53
Negros Oriental	769.89	Olongapo	1,511.50	Mauban, Quezon	303.04
Bukidnon	758.82	Taguig	1,477.76	Nasugbu, Batangas	302.44

Cash accounts of ₱79.34 billion constitute 59.68 percent of the total Current Assets broken down as follows: Cash in Bank – ₱75.05 billion and Cash on Hand – ₱4.29 billion. The provinces, cities and municipalities with the highest amount of Cash in Bank are included in the following table:

LGUs with Substantial Amount of Cash in Bank
(In million pesos)

Province	Amount	City	Amount	Municipality	Amount
Cebu	1,015.74	Quezon	6,276.30	San Juan, Metro Manila	526.65
Zamboanga del Norte	833.58	Manila	3,309.38	Sto. Tomas, Batangas	401.38
Batangas	798.57	Makati	3,283.71	Biñan, Laguna	370.03
Quezon	744.44	Pasig	2,198.95	Dasmariñas, Cavite	296.08
Isabela	708.54	Zamboanga	1,763.23	Pagbilao, Quezon	253.41
Negros Oriental	626.17	Baguio	1,131.15	Valencia, Negros Oriental	249.07
Laguna	558.43	Las Piñas	801.80	Navotas, Metro Manila	221.70
Negros Occidental	549.92	Valenzuela	745.55	Bacoor, Cavite	168.52
Pangasinan	514.42	General Santos	741.95	Cainta, Rizal	162.95
Rizal	511.45	Lapu-Lapu	681.12	Rosario, Cavite	135.56

2. LIABILITITES AND DEFERRED CREDITS – ₱117.35 billion

Total liabilities at yearend hit the ₱88.57 billion level, showing a growth of ₱5.71 billion or 6.89 percent over last year's ₱82.86 billion. Deferred Credits of ₱28.78 billion recorded an increase of ₱7.07 billion or 32.55 percent over the 2005 level of ₱21.71 billion. It consists of Deferred Real Property Tax and Special Education Tax Income – ₱24.68 billion and Other Deferred Credits – ₱4.1 billion. The LGUs with the highest amount of total liabilities are listed below.

Top Ten Provinces, Cities and Municipalities based on Total Liabilities
(In million pesos)

Province	Amount	City	Amount	Municipality	Amount
Nueva Ecija	1,103.20	Manila	4,647.95	San Juan, Metro Manila	586.32
Palawan	1,012.55	Makati	4,278.81	Rodriguez, Rizal	280.74
Negros Occidental	946.71	Quezon	2,443.67	Meycauayan, Bulacan	272.58
Cebu	864.63	Caloocan	2,174.64	Bauan, Batangas	264.14
Bataan	775.62	Parañaque	1,490.11	Navotas, Metro Manila	259.22
Rizal	737.26	Pasay	1,451.72	Bacoor, Cavite	210.15
Zamboanga del		Mandaluyong	1,086.20	Cainta, Rizal	186.75
Norte	632.67	Puerto Princesa	1,067.87	Imus, Cavite	144.81
Laguna	629.44	Cagayan de Oro	1,020.97	Mati, Davao Oriental	144.66
Batangas	612.64	Davao	855.58	Mabalacat, Pampanga	118.45
Bukidnon	578.05				

3. EQUITY – ₱310.19 billion

From the balance of ₱285.41 billion in 2005, Equity grew by ₱24.78 billion or 8.68 percent this year. The increase was brought by the net income realized during the year amounting to ₱40.77 billion and an adjustment of ₱0.74 billion made in the beginning balance of the account. However, it was partly reduced by adjustment of prior year's transactions of ₱0.58 billion and transfer of Public Infrastructure and Reforestation Projects of ₱16.17 billion to their respective registries.

Top Ten Provinces, Cities and Municipalities based on Total Equity
(In million pesos)

Province	Amount	City	Amount	Municipality	Amount
Cebu	10,807.70	Quezon	19,367.44	San Juan, Metro Manila	1,385.82
Rizal	2,998.62	Makati	19,190.23	Cainta, Rizal	1,380.48
Bulacan	2,705.87	Manila	10,656.95	Biñan, Laguna	1,141.51
Laguna	2,645.33	Pasig	9,141.66	Cabuyao, Laguna	816.71
Negros Occidental	2,358.12	Zamboanga	4,084.50	Dasmariñas, Cavite	642.42
Cavite	2,348.75	Caloocan	3,593.46	Sto. Tomas, Batangas	578.76
Tarlac	2,289.25	Olongapo	3,397.03	Navotas, Metro Manila	517.74
Ilocos Sur	2,144.20	Marikina	3,004.30	Bacoor, Cavite	491.37
Batangas	1,875.67	Valenzuela	2,814.82	Rosario, Cavite	438.27
Negros Oriental	1,803.96	Pasay	2,765.45	Limay, Bataan	393.31

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES

For fiscal year 2006, the taxing and other revenue-raising powers vested to the LGUs under Republic Act No. 7160 resulted to a total income of ₱218.30 billion. To ensure and support, among other things the preservation and enrichment of culture, promote health and safety, enhance the right of the people to a balanced ecology, encourage and support the development of appropriate and self-reliant, scientific and technological capabilities, improve public morals, enhance economic prosperity and social justice, promote full employment among their residents, maintain peace and order, and preserve the comfort and convenience of their inhabitants, total expenses reached of ₱177.53 billion leaving a net income of ₱40.77 billion. The results of operations of the Local Government Units are highlighted below.

1. INCOME – ₱218.30 billion

Pursuant to the basic policy of local autonomy that LGUs can exercise the power to create their own sources of revenue and to levy taxes, fees or charges which shall accrue exclusively to their treasury, LGUs generated a total income of ₱218.30 billion. The total income is higher by ₱22.68 billion or 11.59 percent from last year's level of P195.62 billion. Shown below is the list of LGUs by unit which generated the highest and lowest gross income for the year.

LGUs with Highest and Lowest Gross Income
(In million pesos)

Province	Amount	City	Amount	Municipality	Amount
Highest					
Bulacan	1,717.60	Manila	8,298.76	San Juan, Metro Manila	686.56
Cebu	1,620.02	Quezon	7,861.81	Biñan, Laguna	617.37
Negros Occidental	1,476.62	Makati	7,691.14	Cainta, Rizal	510.78
Cavite	1,392.47	Pasig	3,638.82	Dasmariñas, Cavite	509.50
Laguna	1,387.83	Davao	2,930.42	Cabuyao, Laguna	461.75
Pangasinan	1,362.80	Caloocan	2,473.23	Gen. Trias, Cavite	411.67
Batangas	1,344.68	Parañaque	1,851.09	Bacoor, Cavite	404.68
Rizal	1,259.58	Mandaluyong	1,783.99	Navotas, Metro Manilas	389.92
Bukidnon	1,243.76	Muntinlupa	1,632.20	Imus, Cavite	342.70
Quezon	1,211.46	Zamboanga	1,529.97	Mariveles, Bataan	324.35
Lowest					
Batanes	159.05	Palayan	151.22	San Fernando, Romblon	0.27
Camiguin	175.97	Canlaon	176.07	Uyugan, Batanes	12.86
Siquijor	179.12	Vigan	187.26	Ivana, Batanes	13.30
Biliran	217.35	Science City		Lumbaca-Unayan, Lanao	
Guimaras	245.33	of Muñoz	203.83	del Sur	13.67
Marinduque	266.55	Tangub	206.49	Sabtang, Batanes	14.18
Apayao	280.56	Candon	209.57	Burgos, Surigao del Norte	14.34
Mountain Province	282.40	Tabaco	212.79	Hadji Panglima Tahil, Sulu	14.36
Ifugao	301.06	Trece Martires	218.85	San Sebastian, Samar	14.47
Romblon	303.59	Isabela	222.44	Paglat, Maguindanao	14.81
		La Carlota	223.91	Guinsiliban, Camiguin	15.33

Of the total income, 67.29 percent or ₱137.67 billion represents Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA). The ten LGUs which received the highest and lowest share of IRA from the National Government for the current year is shown below:

LGUs with the Highest and Lowest Share from Internal Revenue Allotment
(In million pesos)

Province	Amount	City	Amount	Municipality	Amount
Highest					
Pangasinan	1,164.26	Quezon	1,915.75	Dasmariñas, Cavite	223.16
Cebu	1,069.78	Davao	1,626.80	Bacoor, Cavite	191.66
Negros Occidental	1,057.05	Manila	1,264.36	Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro	153.94
Bulacan	1,037.23	Caloocan	1,011.24	San Pedro, Laguna	147.12
Quezon	957.64	Puerto Princesa	996.63	Cainta, Rizal	146.66
Isabela	948.76	Zamboanga	968.81	Navotas, Metro Manila	145.41
Batangas	887.67	Cagayan de Oro	582.28	Ilagan, Isabela	139.71
Palawan	875.71	Iligan	569.34	Imus, Cavite	134.62
Leyte	865.42	General Santos	564.31	Taytay, Rizal	133.28
Iloilo	855.20	Santiago	558.59	Binangonan, Rizal	125.39
Lowest					
Batanes	151.08	Vigan	121.71	Ivana, Batanes	11.84
Camiguin	164.40	Tagaytay	130.53	Uyugan, Batanes	12.18
Siquijor	167.58	Trece Martires	130.94	Mahatao, Batanes	12.34
Guimaras	196.65	Palayan	144.50	Sabtang, Batanes	13.16
Biliran	200.51	Candon	148.80	Burgos, Surigao del Norte	13.40
Marinduque	244.29	Tagbilaran	149.06	Nagbukel, Ilocos Sur	13.44
Mountain Province	259.33	Canlaon	161.83	Lidlidda, Ilocos Sur	13.55
Apayao	276.89	Dumaguete	161.93	Lumbaca-Unayan,	
Quirino	280.65	Balanga	163.14	Lanao del Sur	13.62
Ifugao	284.38	Cavite	168.73	Peñarrubia, Abra	13.75
				San Ildefonso, Ilocos Sur	13.79

2. EXPENSES – ₱177.53 billion

Total expenses incurred by LGUs in fiscal year 2006 totaled ₱177.53 billion, posting an increase of ₱18.47 billion or 11.62 percent from ₱159.05 billion in 2005. List of ten highest and lowest spenders for the year is shown below:

Highest and Lowest Spenders
(In million pesos)

Province	Amount	City	Amount	Municipality	Amount
Highest					
Bulacan	1,349.42	Manila	6,633.25	San Juan, Metro Manila	530.42
Cebu	1,340.12	Quezon	4,927.42	Cainta, Rizal	413.61
Negros Occidental	1,339.71	Makati	4,352.52	Cabuyao, Laguna	387.64
Cavite	1,166.90	Davao	2,681.30	Biñan, Laguna	385.37
Batangas	1,121.73	Pasig	2,557.20	Bacoor, Cavite	366.63
Laguna	1,099.06	Parañaque	1,709.53	Gen. Trias, Cavite	363.50
Bukidnon	1,073.13	Caloocan	1,687.85	Navotas, Metro Manila	324.55
Pangasinan	1,048.10	Mandaluyong	1,583.82	Imus, Cavite	319.41
Quezon	974.69	Muntinlupa	1,339.06	Dasmariñas, Cavite	316.90
Iloilo	936.13	Pasay	1,251.53	Rosario, Cavite	282.59
Lowest					
Siquijor	133.60	Science City of		Concepcion, Misamis	
Camiguin	139.60	Muñoz	117.80	Occidental	12.74
Batanes	144.82	Ligao	126.87	Paglat, Maguindanao	12.86
Biliran	162.55	Isabela	134.06	Lumbaca Unayan, Lanao del	
Guimaras	209.19	Palayan	137.09	Sur	13.08
Mountain Province	210.83	Maasin	138.75	Talalora, Samar	13.44
Marinduque	217.25	Tabaco	141.53	Alegria, Surigao del Norte	13.60
Romblon	239.22	Alaminos	154.38	Hadji P. Tahil, Sulu	13.71
Ifugao	247.99	Canlaon	157.36	Burgos, Surigao del Norte	14.18
Kalinga	267.43	Tangub	159.82	San Benito, Surigao del Norte	14.25
		Vigan	162.86	E. Villanueva, Siquijor	14.27
				Tunga, Leyte	14.32

3. NET INCOME – ₱40.77 billion

For fiscal year 2006, the financial performance of LGUs resulted to a net income of ₱40.77 billion, higher by ₱4.19 billion or 11.46 percent compared to last year's net income of ₱36.58 billion. List of ten LGUs which realized the highest net income for the year is shown below:

LGUs with the Highest and Lowest Net Income
(In million pesos)

Province	Amount	City	Amount	Municipality	Amount
Highest Net Income					
Rizal	500.49	Makati	3,338.62	Biñan, Laguna	232.00
Isabela	395.50	Quezon	2,934.39	Dasmariñas, Cavite	192.60
Bulacan	368.18	Manila	1,665.51	San Juan, Metro Manila	156.15
Pangasinan	314.70	Pasig	1,081.61	Mariveles, Bataan	145.12
Laguna	288.78	Caloocan	785.39	Sto. Tomas, Batangas	97.60
Cebu	279.89	Zamboanga	523.29	Cainta, Rizal	97.17
Albay	268.61	Marikina	459.66	Cabuyao, Laguna	74.11
Quezon	236.77	Ormoc	334.34	San Pedro, Laguna	66.07
Cavite	225.57	Valenzuela	327.19	Navotas, Metro Manila	65.37
Palawan	224.17	Muntinlupa	293.14	Limay, Bataan	61.67
Lowest Net Income					
Apayao	3.76	Iriga	0.29	Pualas, Lanao del Sur	2.01[1]
Quirino	5.16	Balanga	1.73	Madamba, Lanao del Sur	4.56[1]
Lanao del Sur	10.47	Silay	6.35	Panay, Capiz	6.14[1]
Sulu	13.42	Ozamiz	8.01	Tongkil, Sulu	10.08[1]
Batanes	14.23	Bago	12.02	Tugaya, Lanao del Sur	10.97[1]
Tawi-Tawi	23.28	Island Garden City		Lugus, Sulu	15.82[1]
Oriental Mindoro	26.76	of Samal	12.62	Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija	17.66[1]
Basilan	27.44	Malabon	12.88	Masiu, Lanao del Sur	19.86[1]
Maguindanao	31.20	San Fernando,		Pandami, Sulu	21.12[1]
Catanduanes	34.01	La Union	14.03	Talitay, Maguindanao	22.39[1]
		Palayan	14.13		
		Canlaon	18.71	[1] - *in thousand pesos*	

(PDI--Sept. 27, 2007)

BUSINESS

BIR nixes reprieve for tax delinquents

No to installment payments for amnesty applicants

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue said it would not accept installment payment of amnesty fees from tax delinquents.

The agency made the clarification after having been flooded by requests for payment of amnesty fees on installment basis during a nationwide road show on the Tax Amnesty Law.

In a statement, the BIR said the agency had to reject the requests as the Tax Amnesty Law does not allow such an arrangement.

"Tax amnesty is a special tax enhancement program distinguished from the ordinary course of tax administration, hence, installments are not allowed," the BIR said.

BIR officials have been conducting roadshows in the provinces to inform the public of the Tax Amnesty Law's merits, and to invite tax delinquents to come out in the open and start with a clean slate by paying an amnesty fee.

Rep. Danilo E. Suarez, author of the tax amnesty measure, Revenue Commissioner Lilian Hefti and Deputy Commissioner Nelson M. Aspe lead the team conducting the roadshows.

The government aims to generate substantial revenue from the collection of amnesty fees.

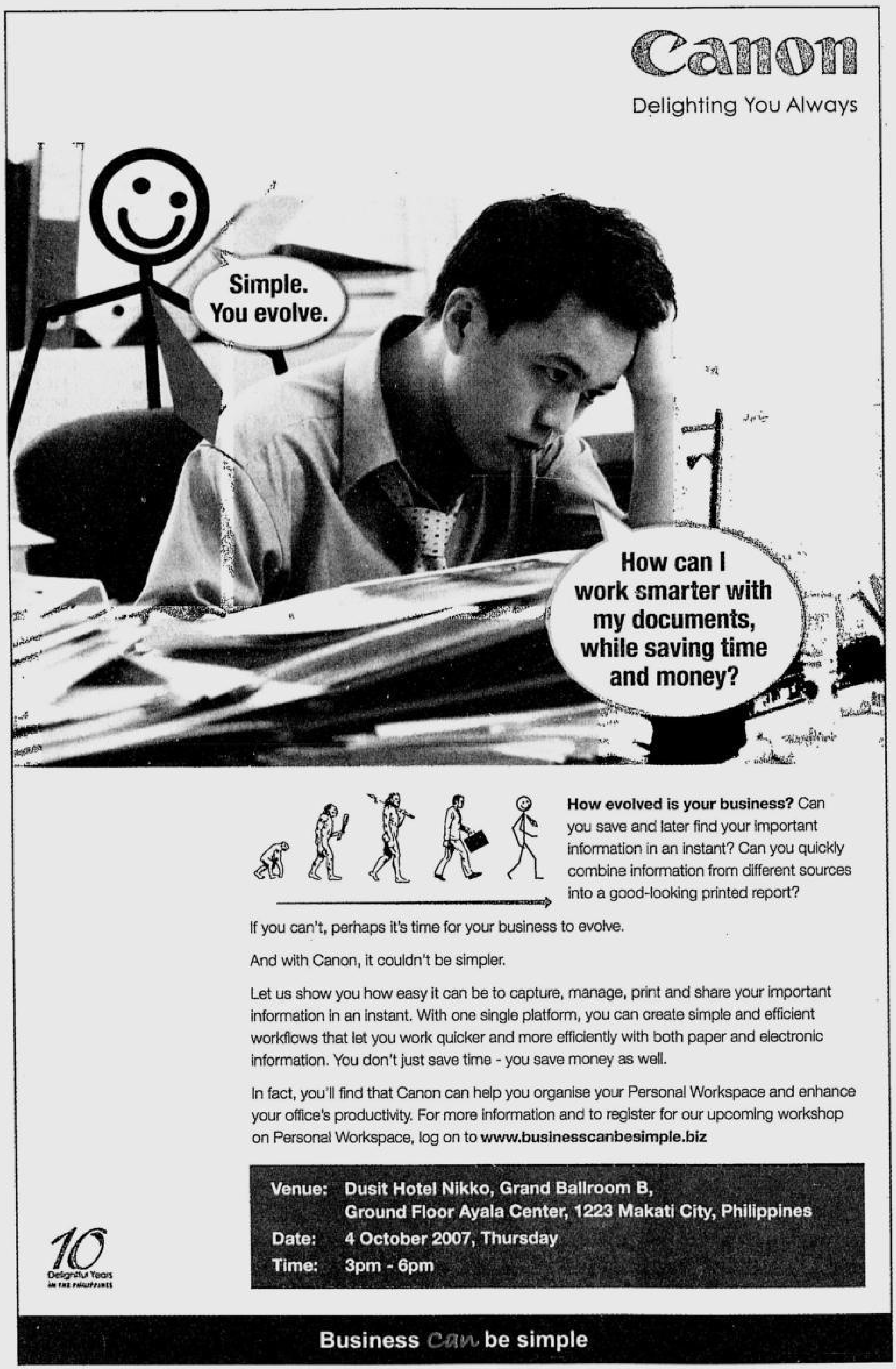
Officials said the law was also aimed at helping the BIR update its taxpayers database to include previously unregistered income earners.

The Tax Amnesty law grants qualified taxpayers immunity from any lawsuit involving deficient tax payments in previous years up to 2005.

Amnesty applicants are required to submit their statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) as of Dec. 31, 2005, which will be the basis for computing the amnesty fee.

The following is the schedule of the tax amnesty rate:

- Individuals, cooperatives, foundations and other juridical entities are imposed an amnesty fee of 5 percent of net worth or P50,000, whichever is higher;
- Corporations with subscribed capital of more than P50 million, 5 percent of net worth or 500,000, whichever is higher;
- Those with subscribed capital of above P20 million to P50 million, 5 percent of net worth or P250,000, whichever is higher;
- Corporations with subscribed capital of between P5 million and P20 million, 5 percent of net worth or P100,000, whichever is higher, and
- Those with subscribed capital of below P5 million, 5 percent of net worth or P25,000, whichever is higher.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PNOC unit, Royal Green enter into jatropha deal

By Abigail L. Ho

PNOC ALTERNATIVE FUels Corp., a subsidiary of Philippine National Oil Co., has inked an agreement with Royal Green Energy Development Inc. for the purchase of jatropha crude oil to be produced from the latter's jatropha plantation.

Under the deal, PNOC-AFC will buy jatropha crude oil from Royal Green at a discounted price, either for its own use or for sale to other parties.

The pricing will be covered by a separate agreement between the two parties.

PNOC-AFC will also provide technical support to Royal Green, "when applicable and necessary."

According to PNOC-AFC, such off-take agreements will help encourage jatropha biodiesel production, ensure market demand and promote the development and use of alternative fuels.

Royal Green is a local firm engaged in the application of technology to propagate high-yielding jatropha special varieties to supply seedling requirements.

"PNOC-AFC and Royal Green are vital partners in the jatropha project," PNOC-AFC president and chief executive Peter Anthony Abaya said. "Royal Green has significant research and technological know-how crucial to PNOC-AFC's desire and mandate to bring the country towards energy independence."

RP savers' risk appetites on the rise, says HSBC

By Doris C. Dumlao

FILIPINOS ARE GAINING MORE appetite for higher yielding investments instead of locking in all of their wealth in physical assets and traditional savings accounts, British banking giant HSBC said yesterday.

This change in risk appetite has allowed the bank to grow its wealth management business in the Philippines by a compounded rate of 25-26 percent over the last two years.

"I think risk appetites are changing and they will continue to change," said Nicholas Winsor, head of personal services for Asia-Pacific at HSBC.

"Certainly, if you look at well-developed markets like the UK and US, people nowadays hold less proportion of wealth in physical assets, and are now putting more in mutual funds and pension funds," he added.

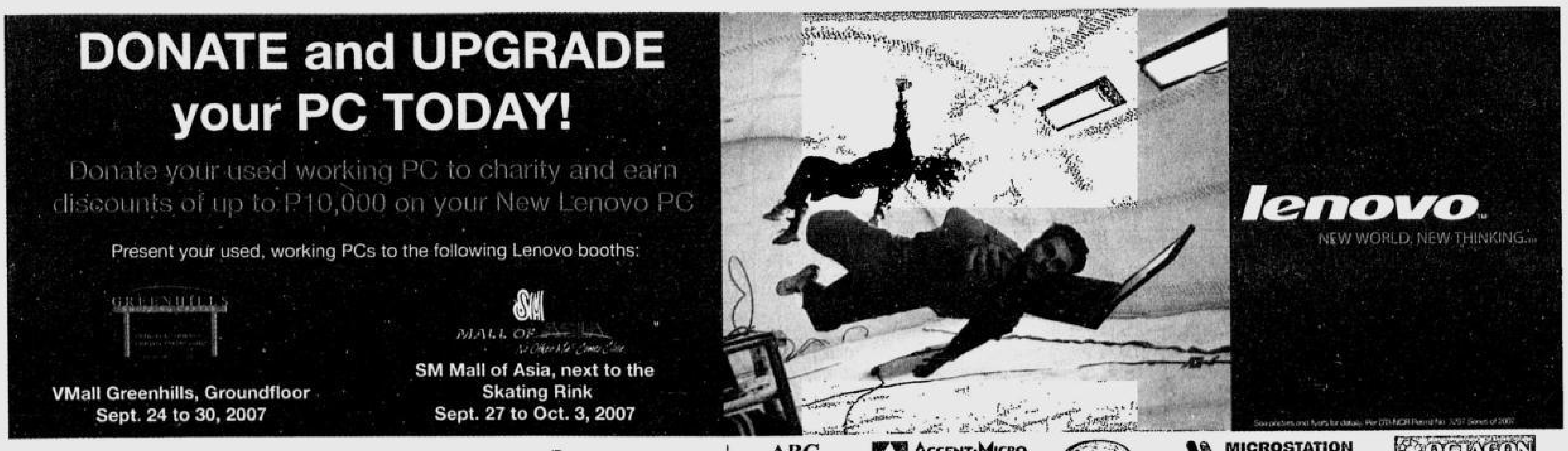
He said that in Asia, where savings rates are high, the potential for wealth management to grow is much larger, although the culture remains relatively more conservative compared to that of the West.

COA releases gov't, LGUs financial reports

TO PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY and accountability, the Commission on Audit has released the financial report of the national government and local government units nationwide.

The reports on Pages B6 and B7 of this section form part of the report on the provinces, cities and municipalities of the National Capital Region, Cordillera Autonomous Region, Regions 1-13 and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao.

These reports were generated using the New Government Accounting System (NGAS) which COA developed to ensure timely and accurate reports.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THURSDAY FOOD

Real pumpkins for Halloween

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

TRICK OR TREAT? IT IS almost that time of year and, for the first time ever in the Philippines, we can celebrate it with real pumpkins!

I saw Rex Puentespina's Halloween display at the Manila Seedling Bank recently and it is a dream come true for all who take Jack-o-Lantern seriously.

Desperate to make real pumpkin soup or pumpkin pie? Then bring out all those recipes and substitute no more. Pumpkins are now readily available. Call 9299306.

Flavorful ribs

Please share the secret to tender and flavorful baby back ribs. Last week, I prepared two slabs of baby back ribs by pressure cooking the meat in a mixture of herbs, spices, garlic and onion with water.

The result was really tender ribs, almost falling off the bone *pa*. So, for my daughter's birthday party, I prepared 12 slabs of ribs, pressure-cooking four ribs at a time. According to the maid, *malambot na* before she took it out of the pressure cooker to refrigerate.

Yesterday afternoon, we took the ribs out of the ref and, since we don't have a charcoal grill, we sort of pan-fried them in a cast-iron pan while brushing them with the remaining sauce from the pressure cooker and some honey-garlic barbecue sauce.

To my surprise, the ribs did not have any flavor from the barbecue sauce we brushed on it. And, to make matters worse, some parts of the ribs were tough *pa*. I was so embarrassed. What did I do wrong?

TYC

Dear TYC, to make perfect ribs please omit the maid from the recipe! . . . Joke!

This is what you must do. If you decide to boil your ribs with a mix of herbs and spices, I see nothing wrong with that. But you must make sure that your spice mix is commensurate to the amount of water you will use to boil the ribs. *Baka naman* it was too diluted, thus the lack in flavor.

Boiling is the fastest, most economical way to prepare ribs but remember that if you are not immediately serving your ribs, meaning you are not grilling and basting with sauce right away, do not remove ribs from the boiling liquid.

If you must prepare days ahead, then I suggest that ribs be re-boiled in water until tender with half the spice mixture that the recipe calls for (easy on the salt though).

Then leave ribs in boiling liquid until ready to grill and baste with sauce. Remember, once the meat is chilled or frozen, it dries out and sometimes becomes tough again.

Another good way of preparing ribs is by completely submerging it in the barbecue sauce. Add about one cup of water to thin it out.

Pour sauce over ribs and bake covered until tender at 350°F. Finish cooking ribs on charcoal grill, basting with sauce every five minutes.

If grilling over coal, adjust its distance from the meat. Having coals too close will cause ribs to burn due to the high sugar content of the barbecue sauce.

Finishing can also be done in the oven. Place ribs on rack, basting at five-minute

REAL/ C4

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Steaks and Roast Galore: Oct. 6 (Sat) 2 - 6 p. m. Beef Tournados with Mustard Sauce, Minute Steak in Pepper Sauce, Pan Roasted Rosemary Chicken with Basil Mashed Potatoes Pan Ajus, Roasted Pork with Apple Sauce & Rice Pilaff, Blackened Fish with Succotash & Cajun Butter, & Osso Buco Steak with lecture and preparation of basic steak, sauces, marinades & techniques of grilling. P1,500.

Brownies & Pies: Oct. 13 (Sat) 2 - 6 p.m. Brownie Cheesecakes, Date Nuts, Rocky Road, Black Forest, French Apple Pie, Lemon Pie & Walnut Pie. P900.

Classic Pasta Class: Oct. 20 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lasagna, Carbonara, Chicken Canelloni, Raviolli with 3 kinds of stuffing, Aglio Olio. P1,000.

Holiday Baking w/ Maya Mixes: Oct. 20 (Sat) 2 - 6 p.m. Carrot Cake Bars, Butterscotch Cookies, Rhum Cake & Chocolate Custard Cake. Includes lecture on sales profit analysis. P600.

Japanese Home Cooking: Oct. 27 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Kani Salad, Japanese Curry, Tonkatsu, Tempura, Japanese Spaghetti, Japanese Hamburger & Sushi. Free Cookbook. P1,000.

Coffee 101 (Barista Class): Oct. 27 (Sat) 2 - 6 p.m. Coverage: Coffee History, Coffee Process, Trouble shooting, Machine know-how, proper grinding. Techniques to perfect froth. Actual preparation of popular **Traditional Hot Coffee:** Espresso, Cappuccino; **Cold Coffee Concoctions Spins, etc**. P1,500.

CERTIFICATE COURSES (Limited enrollment, pre-registration required)

Basic Culinary: Oct. 2-5/16-19 Nov. 6-9 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Proper hygiene, sanitation & safety; nutrition & nutritional cooking; proper mis-en-place of mirepoix, stocks, soups, sauces, marinades, use of herbs & spices combinations, proper purchasing, storage, techniques of disjointing & boning poultry, filleting fish & meat fabrication. With actual preparation of dishes from appetizer, salad, eggs, pasta, seafoods, poultry & meats, dessert including garnishing for plate presentation. Free cookbook. P6,000.

Fundamentals of Bakery Production: Oct. 9-12/23-26 Nov. 13-16 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Basic & commercial baking techniques applicable to the use of various ready mixes, yeast breads, quick breads, pies, cookies & cakes includes theory practice for Commercial Scale Productions with Free Baking Cookbook. P5,000

Catering Seminar: Oct. 24, 25 & 26 (W-F) 3 - 6 p.m. Legal & technical aspect to get started in Catering Business, Facilities, personnel, menu including portioning & quantification. Special Feature: Low-Cost Meals for Catering with Free Catering cookbook. P3,000.

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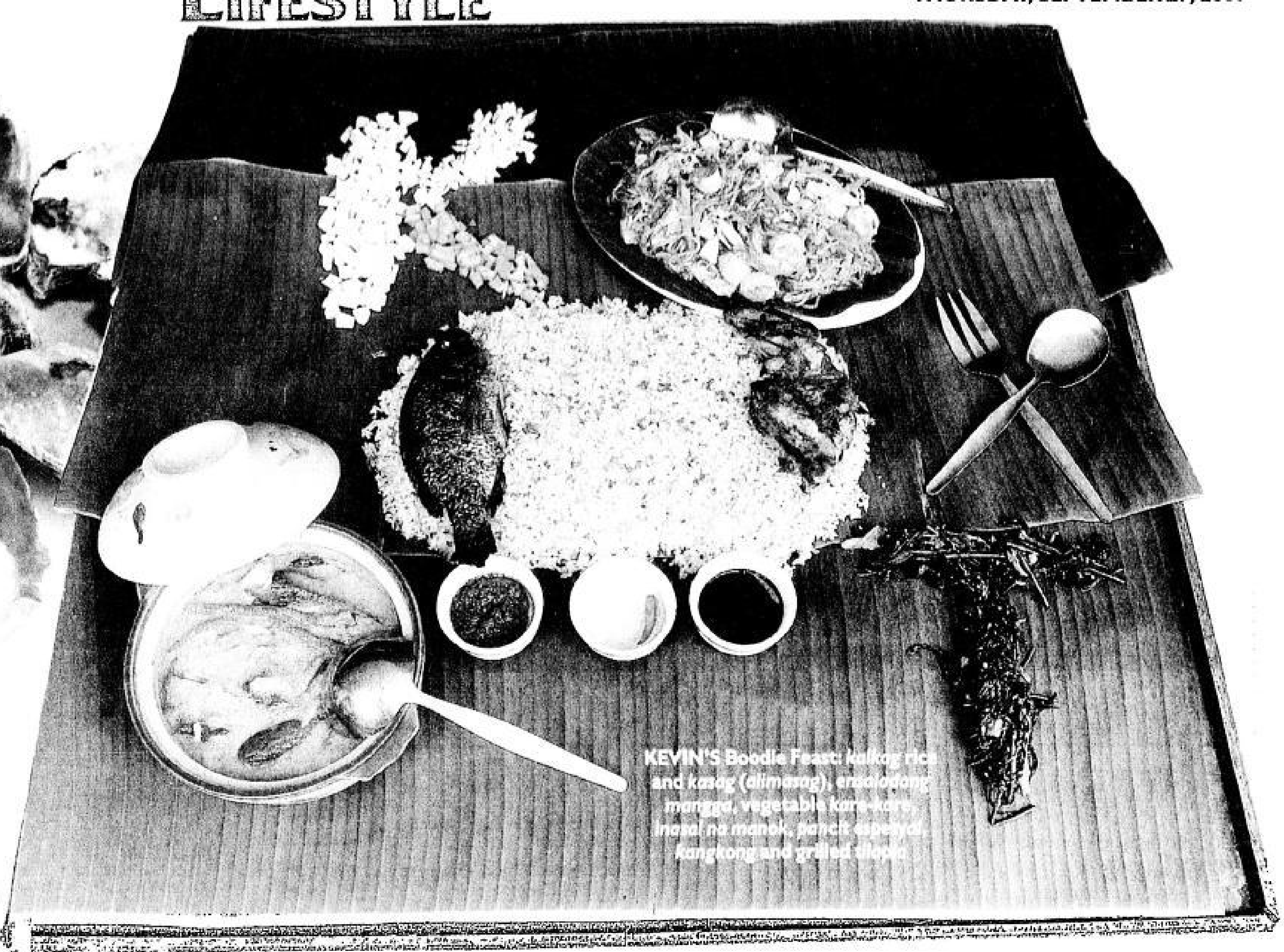


KEVIN'S Boodle Feast: *kalkag* rice and *kasag* (*alimasag*), *ensaladang mangga*, vegetable *kare-kare*, *inasal na manok*, *pancit espesyal*, *kangkong* and grilled *tilapia*

A landlocked seafood haven

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by August dela Cruz

IF YOU HAVE A CRAVING FOR seafood like crab in spicy hot Szechuan sauce or lobsters in green curry paste or prawns richly sautéed in olive oil and garlic or even baked oysters topped with spinach cream and you are near Eastwood City, then visit the newest branch of Blackbeard's Seafood Island.

Only three months old, the Eastwood City branch in Libis, Quezon City, is fast becoming a byword among people who like only the freshest catch of the day.

Seafood Island has also become a favorite of families, *barkada*, and people working in call centers and offices in the area.

The restaurant is part of the Red Crab chain that includes Crustasia, Heaven 'N Eggs, Clawdaddy, and Paloma—all owned by entrepreneur Raymond Magdaluyo.

The success of Seafood Island at Market! Market! in Fort Bonifacio and at Araneta Center in Cubao encouraged the owner to open the outlet in Libis.

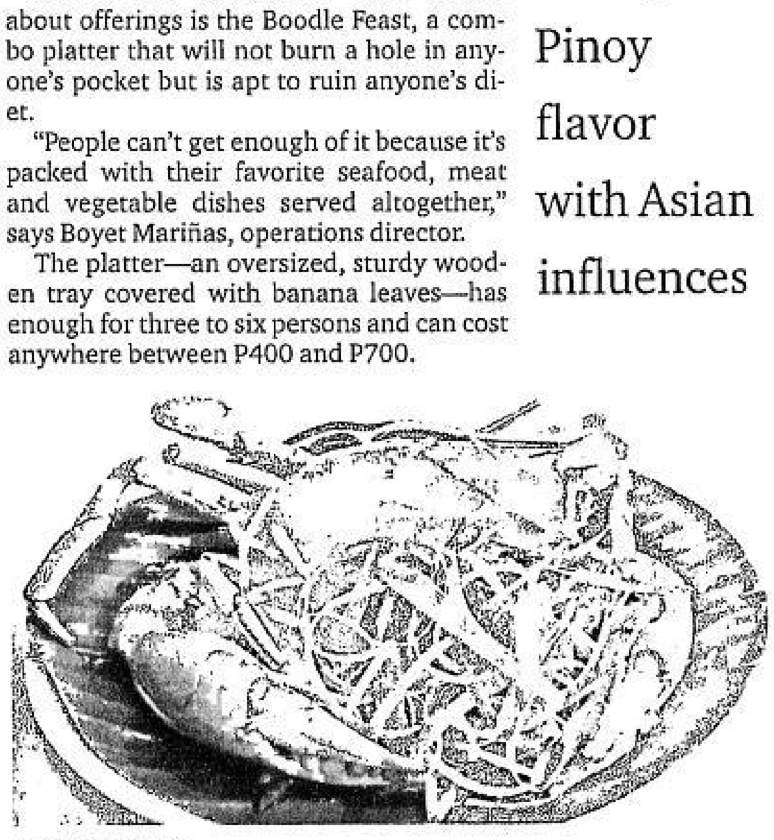
"We're one of the newest players in Eastwood but we're already getting good feedback from our guests," says restaurant manager Martin Estrella. "They tell us, 'We love your food but you ruined our diet.'"

Feast platter

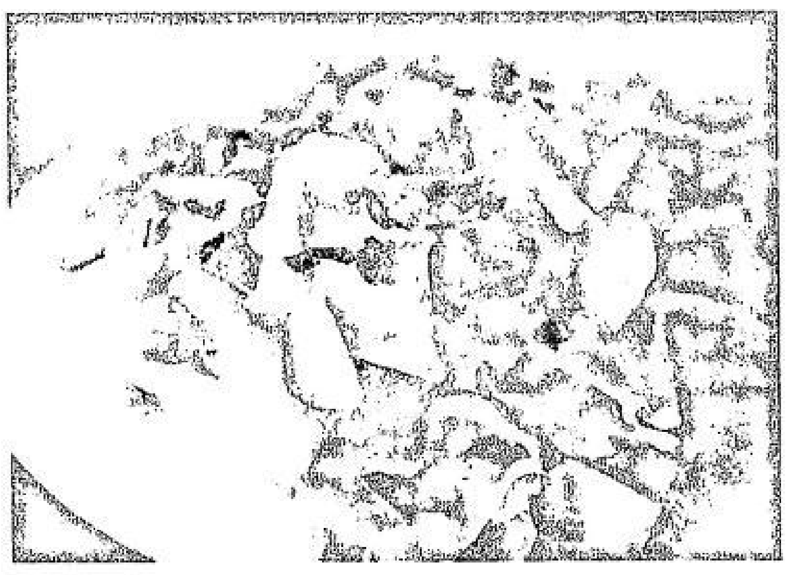
One of the restaurant's most talked-about offerings is the Boodle Feast, a combo platter that will not burn a hole in anyone's pocket but is apt to ruin anyone's diet.

"People can't get enough of it because it's packed with their favorite seafood, meat and vegetable dishes served altogether," says Boyet Mariñas, operations director.

The platter—an oversized, sturdy wooden tray covered with banana leaves—has enough for three to six persons and can cost anywhere between P400 and P700.

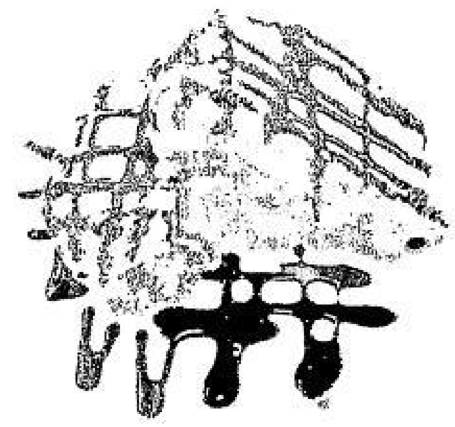


CRAB Maritess



PINOY Nachos, fried Chinese lumpia wrappers topped with garlic, onions, cream, *adobo* flakes and fresh mango chunks

The menu has a strong Pinoy flavor with Asian influences



FRIED Ice Cream with chocolate syrup

"It's served in a huge dish because it's meant for sharing. There are no plates. You can actually eat right there, *kamayan*-style if you wish," Mariñas adds.

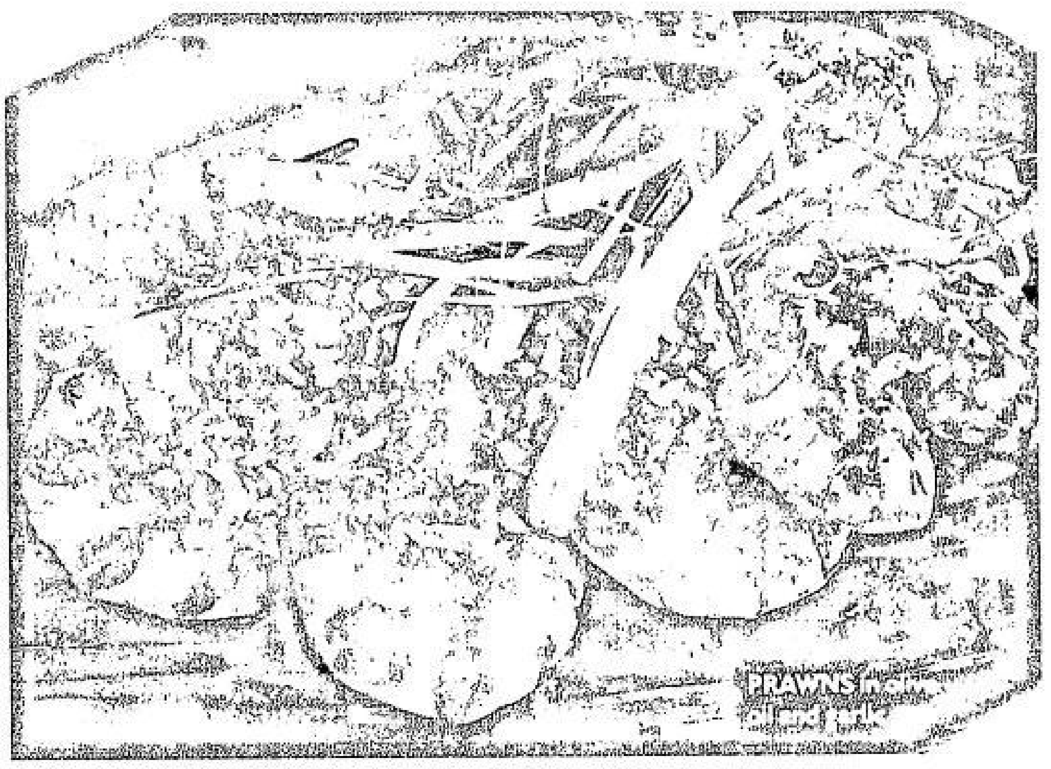
Popular Boodle Feast choices include Dapitan's Pride, a combination of crispy coco gin shrimps, San Mig clams (cooked in San Mig Lite), grilled *tilapia*, grilled squid, *laing*, steamed crabs, grilled *liempo*, *kalkag* rice (*hibi*-flavored rice) and *atchara* papaya.

Magellan's Landing consists of *danggit* chips with pineapple salsa, *kinilaw na tanigue*, grilled *tilapia*, grilled squid and grilled shrimps, steamed crab, chicken *inasal*, grilled vegetables and *bagoong* rice.

Boracay's Feast is a mix of San Mig clams, grilled *liempo*, chicken *adobo sa gata*, grilled squid, grilled *tilapia*, grilled vegetables, *bagoong rice* and *achara* papaya.

Another must-try is Kevin's Boodle: *Kalkag* rice and *kasag (alimasag)*, *ensaladang mangga*, vegetable *kare-kare*, *inasal na manok*, *pancit espesyal* and grilled *tilapia*.

Crab lovers can opt for the All-Crab Boodle: crabs cooked in olive oil, white wine and chili (Crab Maritess) with crab fried rice and shrimp fried rice.



Most of the seafood comes from General Santos City, Aklan, Iloilo and Pangasinan. Sometimes, if crabs are scarce, they get shipments from Pakistan.

On weekdays, Seafood Island serves 20-30 crabs a day. On weekends, 50 or more.

Asian flavors

Seafood Island has a strong Pinoy flavor with Asian influences. The menu features dishes cooked in red and green curry sauce, coconut milk with chilies and lemongrass.

Since seafood is its specialty, naturally Seafood Island has fish. The catch of the day can be grilled, steamed, pan-fried, marinated or roasted. Favorite fish selections are black marlin, tuna belly, salmon belly and *bangus* belly.

Prawns and lobsters are prepared in various ways: simmered in island green curry sauce, Malaysian red curry-style, sautéed in olive oil and garlic, cooked in Szechuan sauce or grilled Hawaiian-style.

The quintessential *sinigang* remains a favorite. In fact, "you can mix and match the ingredients you want to put in your soup and pick your own *pampaasim* (sour ingredient)," Mariñas says.

You can have Sinigang sa Miso, Sinigang sa Bayabas, Sinigang sa Sampaloc or Sinigang sa Kalamansi using *ulo ng* salmon, *bangus* belly, *tilapia* or mixed seafood or white shrimps, or *ulo ng maya maya*.

Sinigang sa Miso with mixed seafood is the top favorite.

You can cap your meal with either fresh fruit platter or green-tea pannacotta. The fried ice cream, ice cream wrapped in frozen tasty bread then deep-fried and drizzled with chocolate syrup, however, may be your best choice.

Magdaluyo is a staunch believer in "enlightened hospitality" and his restaurant employees live by it. Whatever the customers want, they get, says Mariñas, "as long as we can give it. He wants us to be on the side of the customers all the time."

In this restaurant as well, no man is an island.

RESTAURANT manager Martin Estrella and operations director Boyet Mariñas

THE INTERIOR is designed for family and group dining.

Something old, something new

SAN MIGUEL PURE FOODS CULINARY Center chefs developed these filling dishes that are easy to prepare.

For more recipes, visit www.mygreatfood.com.

Beef and Shrimp Jambalaya Rice

¼ c Magnolia Gold Butter
½ c onion, chopped
1 tbsp garlic, finely chopped
¼ c celery, chopped
½ c green bell pepper, chopped
1 pc beef cube, dissolved in
3 c water
1 c uncooked jasmine rice
½ k Monterey Sirloin, cubed
2 pc Monterey Meatshop Spicy Hungarian, cooked and cut diagonally
1 tsp paprika
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
¼ tsp dried thyme
1 pc bay leaf
¼ k shrimp, peeled and deveined
½ tsp hot sauce

In a casserole, melt butter. Add onion, garlic, celery and green bell pepper. Sauté until fragrant. Add remaining ingredients except shrimp and hot sauce. Bring to a boil and simmer. Cover until rice is cooked. Add shrimps. Continue cooking until shrimps turn pink. Add hot sauce and serve.

Serves eight.

Inihaw na Paksiw na Pata

1 k Monterey Pork Pata slices
1 pc onion, quartered
1 tbsp whole peppercorns
6 c water
1 tbsp salt
1 c Purefoods Supremo Cane Vinegar
2 c banana heart, sliced in quarters

For dipping sauce:
1 pc *siling labuyo*
2 tbsp rock salt
2 tbsp broth of the *paksiw*

Grill *pata* slices over charcoal until skin is charred. Transfer to a thick casserole then add onion, peppercorns, water and salt. Let boil then lower heat. Let simmer, covered, until pork is fork tender. Pour in the vinegar then let boil over high heat for five minutes. Do not stir. Add in the banana heart and cook for another two minutes.

For dipping sauce, crush *siling labuyo* in rock salt. Add broth and dissolve the salt. Serve with steaming hot *paksiw*.

Serves five.

Ham and Pork Ball Soup

½ k Monterey Ground Pork
150 g Purefoods Cooked Ham, chopped
2 tbsp spring onions, chopped
¼ c Purefoods Baron All-Purpose Flour
salt and pepper to taste
2 tbsp Magnolia Nutri-oil
¼ c onion, chopped
2 tbsp garlic, chopped
½ c carrots, diced
¼ c celery, diced
¼ c snow peas, cut into 2 pc
2 pc chicken cube, dissolved in
4 c water
2 tbsp cornstarch, dissolved in
4 tbsp water
salt and pepper to taste

In a bowl, combine ground pork, ham, spring onion, flour, salt and pepper. Form into a ball. Set aside.

In a saucepan, heat oil. Add onion, garlic, carrots, celery and snow peas. Cook until vegetables are tender. Add chicken broth. Bring to a boil and simmer. Thicken with cornstarch mixture. Season to taste and serve.

Serves 6-8.

STUDENTS of In2skills—Arlene Mendoza, Dolores Cater, Erlinda Garcia, Larissa Mae Sarangaya, Ryan Pillerva, Jesus Soria, Vic Diaz, and Judy Lawrence—show off their cold garde manger.

10-day cooking course

IN2SKILLS CULINARY Center, the latest addition to culinary schools in Metro Manila, gives students 10 days of hands-on training.

The 10-day course includes Art of Cold Garde Manger, Butchery, Basic Fondue & Sauces, Different Cooking Methods, Japanese Cuisine, Chinese Cuisine, Spanish Cuisine, Italian Cuisine, Fusion and latest trends.

The workshop is facilitated by chef Boy Logro and his son Richard. Logro is the Philippines' first and only Pinoy executive chef in a five-star hotel. After 10 days, students have the option to join the training center's on-the-job training (OJT) program to prepare them further for culinary careers here or abroad. In2Skills is at Greenworld Plaza, President Avenue, Parañaque. Call 820-2554 or 0919-8630755.

Fabulous chicken recipes

THE REGGIE ASPIRAS SCHOOL OF CULINARY arts offers the following classes:

Sept. 28—Chicken was Never this Fabulous (all new): Chicken with Orange Tomato Sauce and Wild Rice, Balsamic Roast Chicken with Horseradish Cream Gravy, Boursin Roast Chicken Stuffed with Sticky Rice with Sweet Chili Glaze, Browned Hainanese Chicken with Soy Rice and Condiments, The Ultimate Indian Butter Chicken with Condiments

Sept. 29—Pasta 101 Buffet (all new and improved recipes, special class): Carbonara, Vongole, Marinara, Bolognese, Primavera, Putanesca, Salmon and Caviar, Arrabiata, Pesto, Neopolitan, Alfredo with Mixed Mushrooms and Four Cheeses, Al Amatriciana, Authentic Lasagna al Forno

Oct. 1—All About Choux Dough (all new): Savory—Mushroom, paté with berry-tossed greens, shrimp, cream, chicken and blue cheese; Sweet—eclair, profiteroles; 3 Kinds of Dough—classic, garlic and herb; Chocolate

Oct. 3—Fancy Sinigang: Sea Bass Sigang with Mixed Citrus, Patang Sigang sa Bayabas, Angus Belly Sigang sa Sampalok, and Pork Sparerib Sinigang with Taro; side dishes, relishes and condiments. Call 9289296, 9273008 or 7221691.

Food gifts for special occasions

Maya Kitchen offers a festive collection of ideas and instructions, as well as easy-to-follow recipes, for making food gifts with Edible Food Gifts Sept. 29, 2-6 p.m.

Basic Cake Design will be offered Sept. 27-28, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

A bartending class will be held Sept. 29, 2-6 p.m.

Call Maya Kitchen at 8921185 or 8925011 local 108; e-mail mkitchen@ultimate.info.com.ph.

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THE CONSUMER

Telemarketing by cellular phone

By Linda B. Bolido

READER RAY AQUINO IS among the growing number of people who are getting annoyed by unsolicited offers they get through their mobile phones.

He said he was woken up at 1:30 a.m. by an offer from the ongoing Premyo sa Resibo raffle. Having set his cell phone to wake him up at 4 a.m., he was at least not overly alarmed.

But for other people it could have been extremely stressful, even terrifying, to be woken up unexpectedly in the middle of the night.

After all, that usually means some very bad news.

Frustrating

I myself am getting frustrated about unsolicited offers I get on my mobile. I have called the attention of my mobile network and even the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas about this but so far to no avail.

The most recent offer I got was this: "This is Dennis Bustamante of AIM Global Inc. We're looking for result-oriented individuals who want to do business with us on a part-time or full-time basis and be part of our expansion program in Southeast Asia.

"You are cordially invited to our much-awaited free business symposium."

The message included the agenda for the event so you could imagine how long it was.

But usually, the messages go like this:

"Get a non-collateral cash loan as low as 1.39-percent interest per month! No co-maker! Call or text Marlon at this number."

Persistent

The most persistent are people who say they are with China Trust Bank: "Cash loan from Chinatrust with interest loan of as low as 1.39 percent per month. We also have car loan financing brand-new or second-hand unit car. Car mortgage or/CR only payoff bank balance... Look for Ms Jinky."

A similar message came from a Ms Grace.

I asked Marlon earlier how he got my number and his reply was "through system download."

What does that mean? What system did they download? And why is my number available for these people to access?

They only use my postpaid line. I do not get anything in my prepaid number.

I was assured by my mobile network that their database was not being shared with anyone.

Another person who was also receiving such messages asked how the sender got her number. She said she was told banks had a database that they shared.

Now, why would banks share their clients' info with competitors and leave their clients open to the "harassment" of other telemarketers?

It is bad enough that you get all sorts of offers from your own bank but for them to "feed" you to the others this way, if the information is correct, is worse.

So far, all my complaints have not yielded any positive results, except the one I made to Citibank Philippines. I got one message from a telemarketer and I have not received any such message from Citibank since.

But China Trust people never say die. In addition to Jinky, Marlon and Grace, I also got an offer from Joy and a few others.

Disappearing act

Meanwhile, have you noticed how restaurants are making "virtual" price increases without appearing to change the costs of their dishes?

One major fast-food chain's servings are noticeably getting tinier although the prices of its food have not changed.

Take a close look at your next order of *daing na bangus* and you will note that the fish is not as big as before. Even more telling, the *achara* that comes with it will not even fill a spoon.

Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Mascardo and Yague Sts., Makati City; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph

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BIG pumpkins for Halloween and little ones for decorative purposes

Real pumpkins for Halloween

From page C1

intervals until the meat takes on glaze, 15-20 minutes.

Empanada

Can you please share your recipe for chicken and pork *empanada*, one that's baked? What other fillings do you suggest?

Also, how can I prevent my cookies from becoming flat? The dough spreads out instead of being round with an *umbok* at the top. I'm thinking that I'm not measuring my flour correctly.

IMELDA

The cookie question first. I doubt if it is the flour. I am more inclined to think that you do not chill your dough enough. Try this. Make your cookie dough and chill it overnight, then bake. That should give you your magic *umbok*!

Now on to *empanada*. I never made baked *empanada*. I am always happy making fried ones and I am sharing that recipe with you. For your baked *empanada*, I asked chef Dennis Hipolito for his crust recipe.

Dennis' Baked Flaky Empanada Crust

290 g butter (or 50:50 butter and shortening)

450 g all-purpose flour

10 g salt

20 g sugar

75 g ice cold water

Dissolve salt and sugar in water.

Combine flour and butter/shortening mixture until butter size is broken down to the size of peas.

Slowly incorporate water, adding enough to bind dough without over kneading.

Refrigerate overnight wrapped in plastic wrap.

Roll out on floured surface.

Cut, stuff with filling.

Brush with egg wash (1 egg beaten + pinch salt).

Bake 375°F until golden.

My Fried Empanada Crust

4 c flour

½ c butter

2 eggs

¼ c evaporated milk

¾ c powdered sugar

1 tsp baking powder

1 tsp salt

Combine in processor until mixture gathers together to form a ball.

Roll out on floured surface, stuff, seal and deep-fry.

Empanada Filling:

¼ c butter

2 tbsp olive oil

½ k ground beef, pork or chicken

3 tbsp garlic

½ c each of onions, raisins, peas, whole corn

2 tbsp tomato paste

1/3 c canned whole tomatoes, drained, seeded and chopped

Sugar, salt, pepper, pepper flakes to taste

½ c cheddar cheese, shredded

Brown beef in butter and olive oil.

Add garlic and onions.

Add the rest of the ingredients except cheese, sugar, salt and pepper.

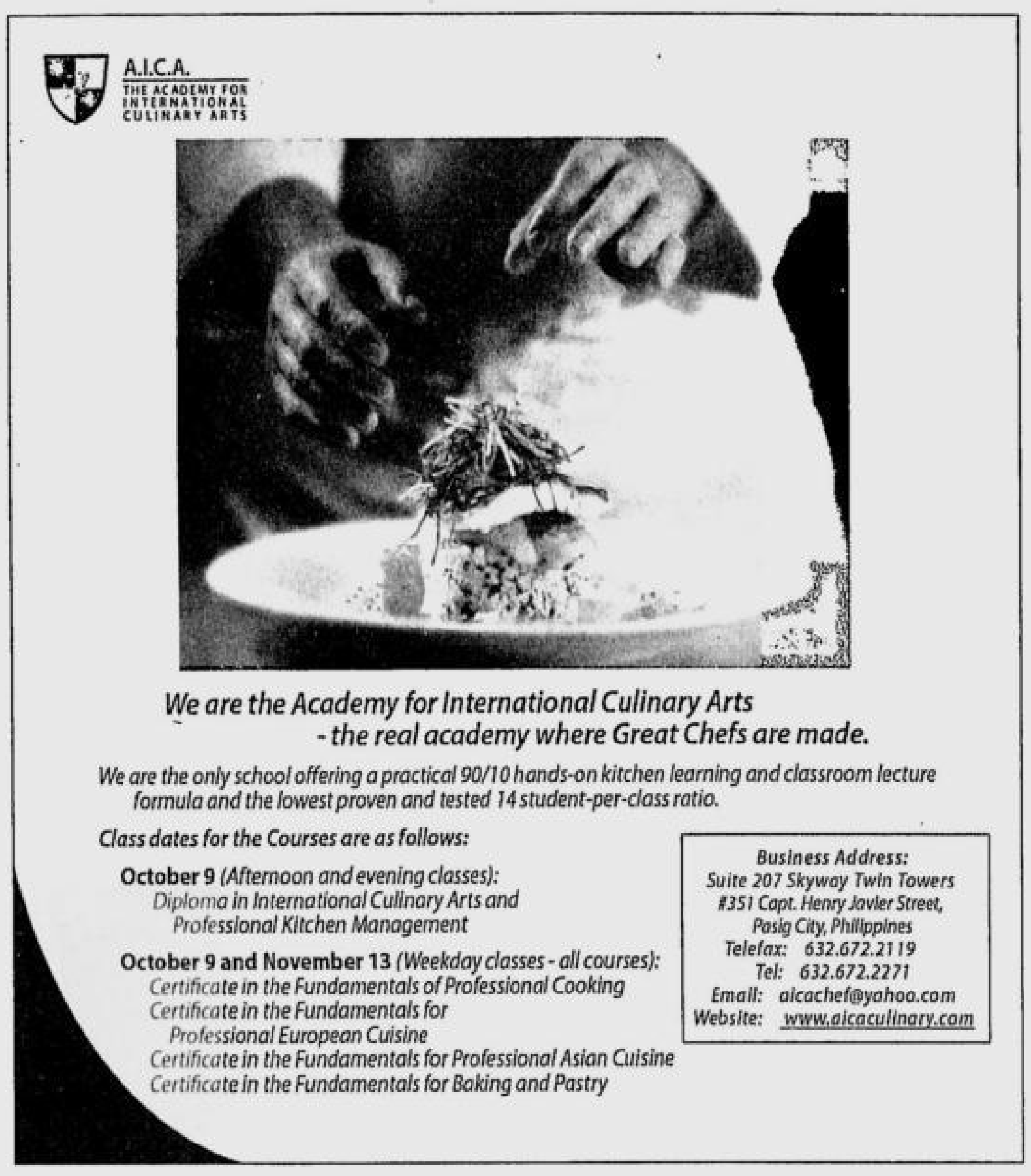
Continue to cook over low heat until liquid evaporates.

Season to taste.

Cool mixture.

Add cheese.

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph



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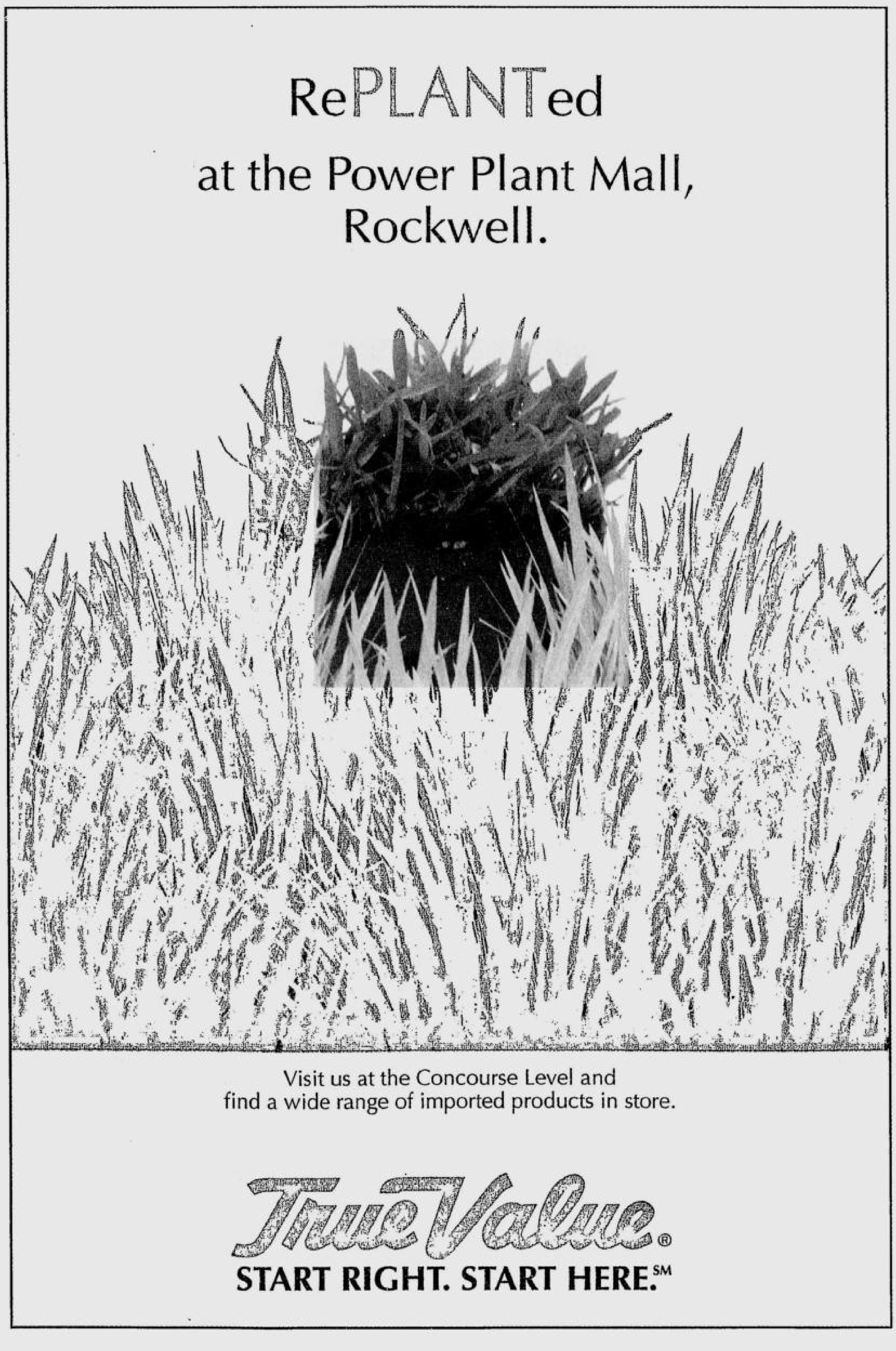

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TERESA Almalbis shows off her best-selling achara.

Authentic taste of home for West Coast Pinoys

FILIPINO-AMERICANS IN the West Coast—from Seattle, Washington to San Diego, California—are enjoying grilled *liempo*, fried trout, and roasted chicken with such side dishes as sweet and sour pickled green mango and *acharang* papaya, just the way they are done in the Philippines.

And with good reason. Those side dishes are indeed made in the Philippines, in Roxas City, Capiz, to be exact.

Businesswoman Teresa Almalbis, a member of the Hontiveros clan, got the idea for pickling and preserving vegetables and fruits for export to expatriate Pinoys from her brother.

A food retailer in the West Coast, he knew that while Asian groceries carried a lot of those items, they often did not have the taste Filipinos liked.

Sometimes they did not even look familiar to Filipinos.

Almalbis, mother of well-known pop singer Barbie Almalbis-Honasan, said a cousin of theirs gave her brother bottled pickled mango as *pasalubong* to business associates in the United States.

"When my brother's business partners tasted the pickled mango, they liked it so much they prodded him to have it exported to the States," said Almalbis, a graduate of fine arts, major in interior design, of the College of the Holy Spirit in Manila and an accomplished singer and composer.

The order of pickled mangoes launched the family-owned corporation Mother's Blessing. It was set up by Almalbis, her sisters and two female cousins in 2002.

To improve food preservation and lengthen shelf-life, the company sought the assistance of the Department of Science and Technology.

Initially, Almalbis, with the help of husband Eleazar, made *achara* in 12-oz bottles for supermarkets in Metro Manila. They also tried making pickled ampalaya, bamboo shoots and *ubod* (coconut pith). The results were discouraging.

"During that period, we only sold two to five bottles a week," she said. Hence, the focus on the West Coast market now.

Achara or pickled green papaya is the company's top seller in the US. But MBII also manufactures halved green and ripe mango preserves, fruit syrups and concentrates of *calamansi, langka*, melon, *ube, buco-pandan*, green and ripe mango. It also sells *muscovado* (raw sugar).

Almalbis said Fil-Ams used their fruit purees of ripe and green mango and concentrates of local fruits to make shakes and juices.

LIFESTYLE

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TOOLS of the trade. Shaking your cocktail in living colors

Shaken, stirred and served

The Twisted Shakers now provide a long overdue service for party hosts—bartending

KENNETH LU, Brent Tecson and José Miguel Zozobrado with their original concoctions

By Linda B. Bolido
Photos by
Rudy Esperas

PLANNING a party but not looking forward to serving your guests a punch that does not live up to its name or the unimaginative beer and spirits?

It is a problem that many hosts or party organizers have to face. While they have a long list of caterers to choose from, many food providers can only manage to serve a beverage that will not even pass muster as a poke much less a punch.

So hosts or hostesses have to settle for sodas and juices and any beverage they can get from supermarkets and liquor stores, served neat or with just a few ice cubes.

Well, five senior students of De la Salle University-College of Saint Benilde (DLSU-CSB) have decided to come to the rescue of party hosts who want to make the drinks as varied and impressive as the food. They will even put on a show of juggling and fancy pouring to liven up the event.

In fact, with these five tending the bar, a cocktail party becomes a doable alternative to sit-down or buffet dinners for people.

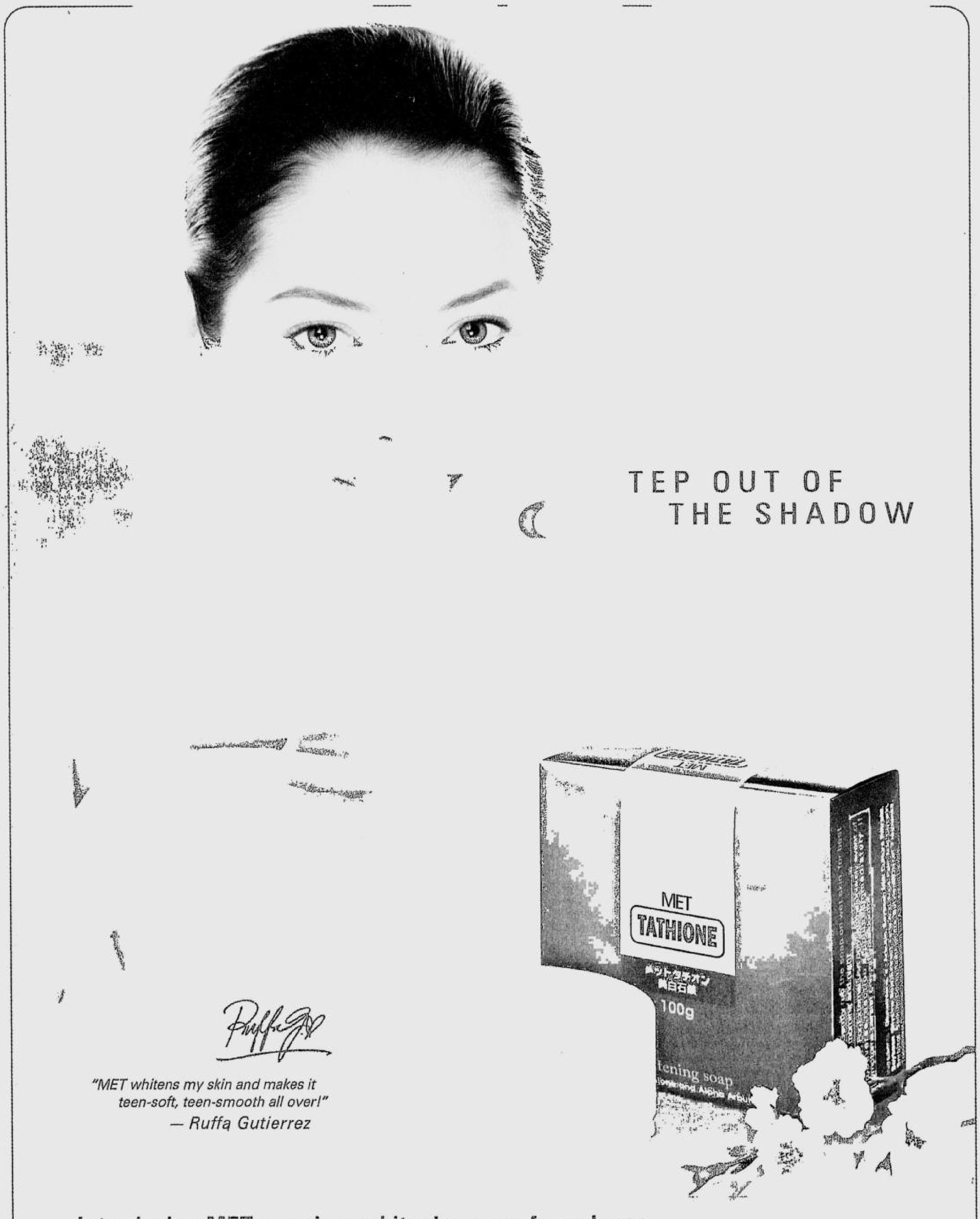
Buddies and classmates José Miguel Zozobrado, Brent Tecson, Kenneth Lo, Paolo Matias and Alvan Young, hotel and restaurant management students major in hospitality management, have set up Twisted Shakers to provide bartending service where it is needed.

The five do not claim to be the first to come up with the idea. Some of their mentors at the college were first to think of providing this long overdue service and set up Flaming Olives.

And the students are not out to undermine their teachers' business. Zozobrado said they concentrated on campus events and small get-togethers while their mentors did the big events. They also referred to their teachers events they felt were out of their league.

Set up only some two months ago,

SHAKEN/ D2



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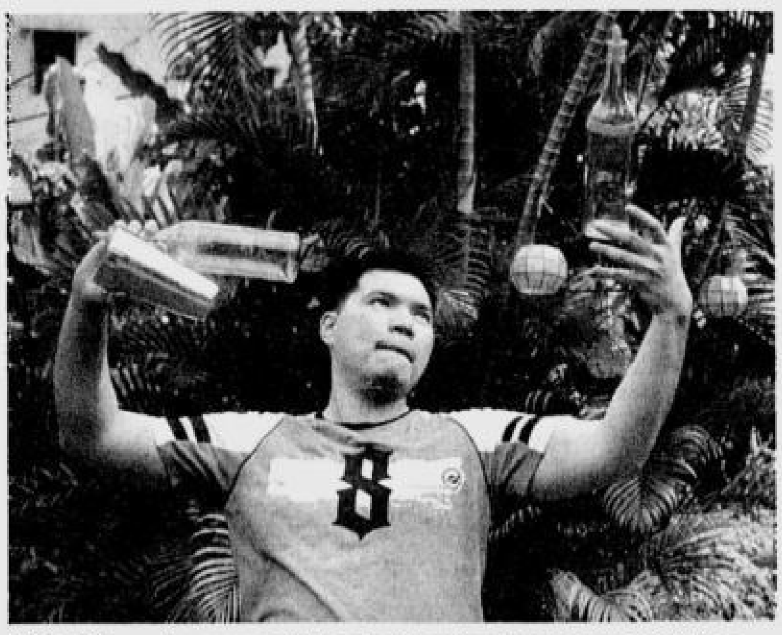
TECSON prepares his Blue Heaven.



THE BAR service comes with a show, as Zozobrado demonstrates.

ROGER CARPIO

ALVAN Young mixes and juggles...

ROGER CARPIO

... AND SO does Paolo Matias.

ROGER CARPIO

ZOZOBRADO gets inspiration from Bob Marley for his cocktail mix.

KENNETH Lo's Bloodline is based on the vampire legend.

Shaken, stirred...

From page D1

the biggest event they had to handle so far was a party at the University of Santo Tomas campus for about 1,000 people.

Like caterers, the group presents the host or event organizer its menu of drinks. It has over 30 concoctions in its repertoire, including the top favorite Tequila Sunrise and mixes the members have entered in campus or outside competitions.

Zozobrado said they could also do mixes for children's parties. But parents need not worry. Twisted Shakers serves "mock" cocktails for kids, colorful concoctions that are completely nonalcoholic.

The host often settles for four to five varieties.

"A young crowd usually wants mixes," the bartenders said, with girls preferring sweeter concoctions. Sodas, beer and wines are the responsibility of the host.

The group takes care of other bar needs—straw, ice, cups (plastic, no fancy glassware that can break or get lost). Standard base beverage for mixes are tequila, vodka, rum, grenadine and pomegranate. Everything is locally made except for Bacardi's white rum.

Zozobrado said: "The materials we use are the bases for computation of the fee... Depending on the arrangements we make with the organizer, we either keep the leftover drinks or leave them with the host."

All five usually tend bar although if the event is rather bigger than their usual, they rope in other classmates and friends to help. They also often seek the advice of their mentors.

Twisted Shakers only need a week or two-week notice to get ready for bar duties.

Call 0927-5297694 or 09228289696; e-mail twisted_shakers@yahoo.com or visit www.twistedshaker.multiply.com.

Marley's Rush

1 oz Malibu Rum
1 oz melon liqueur
½ oz Creme de Bananes
½ oz Del Monte Pomegranate Syrup
Del Monte Sweetened Mango Juice
Del Monte Sweetened Orange Juice

Pour Malibu, melon liqueur and Creme de Bananes into a cocktail shaker with ice.

Shake and strain into a slim pilsner glass.

Top with mango and orange juice.

Float pomegranate syrup.

Garnish with pineapple wedge and cherry.

Bloodline

1 oz vodka
1 oz melon liqueur
1 oz Lime Cordial
½ oz Cointreau
¼ oz amaretto liquor
½ oz grenadine syrup
3-4 oz Del Monte Pineapple Lychee Juice or Del Monte Pineapple Guava Juice

Pour vodka, melon liqueur, Lime Cordial, Cointreau, amaretto liquor and juice into a cocktail shaker with ice.

Shake and strain into a tall glass.

Drop grenadine into the center of the drink.

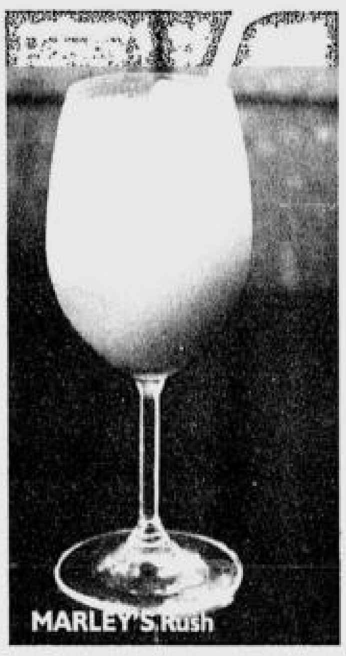
Garnish with lime wheel, lemon wheel or orange wheel.

Blue Heaven

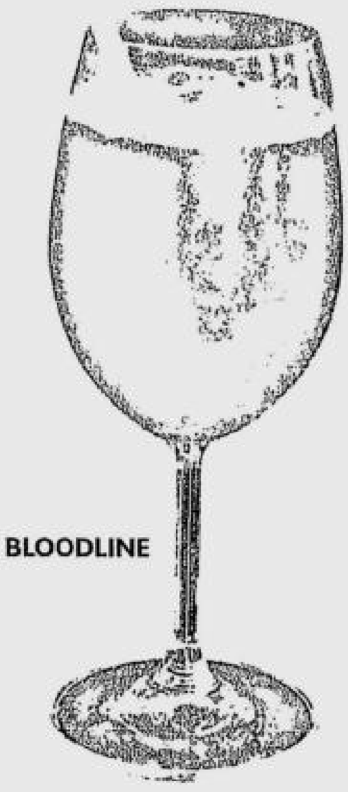
1 oz white rum
½ oz amaretto
½ oz Blue Curaçao
½ oz lime juice
3 oz pineapple juice

Shake and garnish with pineapple wedge.

BLUE Heaven

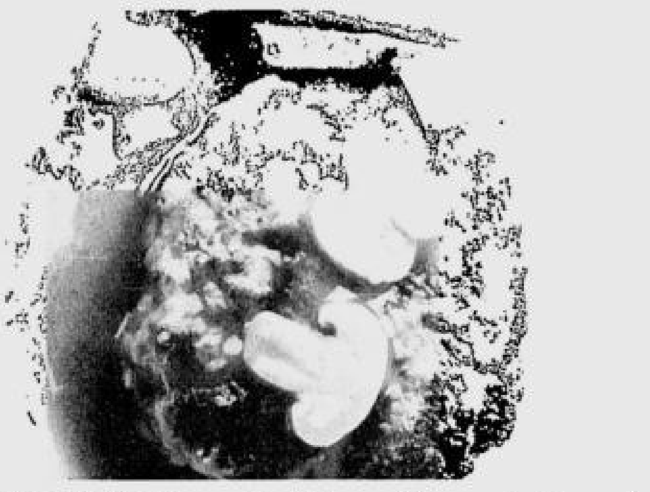


MARLEY'S Rush



BLOODLINE

CRUSTASIA offers special noodles—Hokkien Fried Noodles, a rich fried noodles sensation of vermicelli, yellow noodles, mixed seafood, pork strips and spices; Hae Mee Prawn Noodle Soup, a combination of prawns and pork strips cooked in shrimp soup, thin noodles, bean sprouts and *kangkong*; Pad Thai, stir-fried noodles with shrimps, dried radish, tofu and egg, among others. Call 7285463, 6313857 and 9013607.



COCORAMA Burger Steak is one of the popular items of Cocorama, which also offers Island Specials and the Coco Bento Specials. Other favorites are Taco Rama, Island Pasta Bamboo, Omelets and French Toast Combo Plates, Groovy Waffles, Cocorama Torpedos, Scooby's Steaks and Chops, Pancake Stacks, among others. Cocorama is at 6/F, The Ledge, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Call 9100401.

DINING OUT

New congee line

HEALTHY SHABU-SHABU RECENTLY unveiled its line of congee, including chicken, seafood, Angus beef, crab and oyster. Plain congee is also available.

HALFMOON offers bibingcrepes and coffee like Americano, Capuccino, Latte, Mocha and Macchiato. Halfmoon has branches at Mines View Hotel in Baguio City, SM North Edsa and Tomas Morato, QC.

CARLO'S PIZZA offers Italian pizza and 15 varieties of pasta. Carlo's Pizza outlets are at BF Homes and Moonwalk, Parañaque; SM Mall of Asia; SM Baguio; Camp John Hay; and Tagaytay.

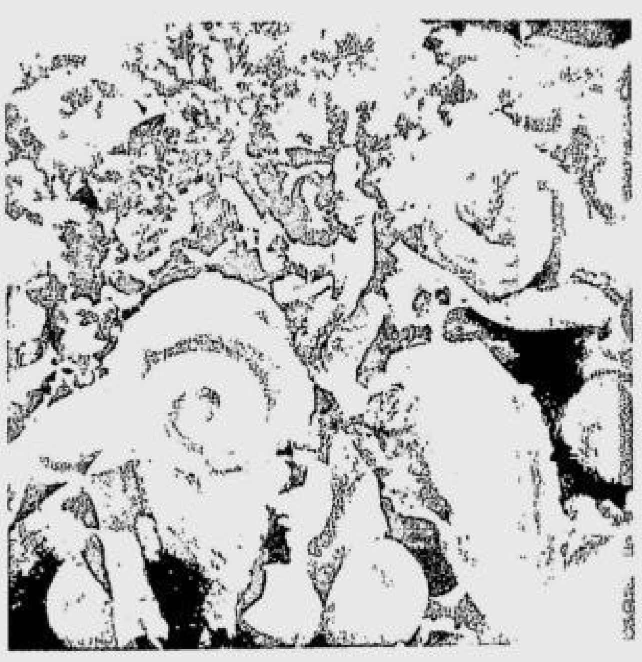
THE BELLEVUE'S Cake of the Month lets you indulge in a combination of Irish cream, choco mocha beans and mocha mirror. Available at the Pastry Corner. Call 7718181.

TERIYAKI BOY presents Kushiyaki, the latest addition to its extensive menu consisting of skewered morsels of tuna, beef, chicken, pork, *lapu-lapu* and *ika* (squid) served with regular or spicy sauce. An order comes with three sticks at P65-P75. The new Kushiyaki is available in all 31 outlets, including the newest at Santana Grove, Parañaque.

DENCIO'S, the restaurant known for its wide array of Filipino and grilled dishes, has become a favorite venue for large gatherings. Dencio's restaurant has become a particular favorite of families celebrating special occasions. Bestsellers include Sisig, Krispy Pata, Sari-Saring Sinugba, Sinigang na Ulo ng Norwegian Salmon, Asparagus in Garlic, Sizzling Fried Chicken and Nilasing na Hipon sa Taba ng Talangka. Call 8190155 or visit www.dencios.biz.

MooLatté
BLIZZARD

UPSIDE DOWN IN EASTWOOD
The gravity-defying Blizzards of the popular American ice cream chain, Dairy Queen, is now in Eastwood City, Libis, QC. Have your favorite upside-down Blizzards—cups of reduced-fat ice cream in different flavors, from Oreos to mud pie and good old brownies. The DQ parlor is at Eastwood Citywalk 1. Call 0917-8EWCITY.



CLAWDADDY Crabhouse and American Grill offers Smoked Salmon. Other favorites include Skillet Sensations Tomato and Italian Sausage Pasta, Clammy Spaghetti, Jambalaya and Crab Skillet, Blackened Catfish Fillet, New Orleans Snapper Fillet and Crabmeat Bake. Must-try dishes are Clawdaddy's Baby Back Ribs, Clawdaddy's Barbecued Beef Plate, Hickory Chicken Roast, Double Espresso Cream Chicken Barbee, Blackened and Baked Chicken, Clawdaddy's Queen and King Sampler, all-American BBQ Feast. Clawdaddy is at The Ledge, 6/L, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Call 6365679.

TAPA KING offers Tapantastic Treats as part of its "Mighty at 20" anniversary celebration. By adding P55, diners can have any four of their favorite *tapa* meals and get 1.5 liter Pepsi, plus a choice between *longganisa* or *lumpiang* shanghai meal. This means savings of as much as P82.50. The promo, available until Oct. 15, is for delivery only and not valid for bulk orders worth P2,000 above. Call 895TAPA or 633TAPA.

Chain opens 32nd branch

THE FRENCH BAKER HAS opened its latest branch at the Robinson's Galleria Supermarket in Ortigas Center, Pasig.

Johnlu Koa, president and chief executive officer of the chain; his wife Marilou; father Raymundo Koa Sun Len, president of French Baker; mother Go Chu Ai, treasurer; Tweetie de Leon, actress and model; Cory Quirino, beauty and wellness expert; and Robina Gokongwei of Robinsons Supermarket Corp. cut the ribbon officially opening the branch.

The new outlet, the chain's 32nd, allows the store to service customers from both the supermarket and the mall and gives them more dine-in and take-out options.

Koa said: "This new addition to the French Baker family is proof of our commitment to reach out to our loyal customers, wherever they are."

The new branch offers fresh, soft buns with an assortment of fillings: corned beef, ham and cheese, tuna, cookie 'n' cream, yellow mongo, coconut or mozzarella cheese.

COUNTRY COOKING
Micky Fenix

Tasting a TV chicken recipe

FOOD IS THE BIG STORY IN the movies these days.

"Ratatouille" was such a hit even if its principal character, Remy, was a rat, a creature that kitchens are not supposed to have.

I could not get myself to watch it even if my sons told me it was so smart and funny. They added that the writers and animators were trained by the great chef Thomas Keller at the French Laundry in Napa Valley so knife skills and cooking techniques were correct.

If it were Mickey Mouse, I wouldn't have hesitated. But watching an anatomically correct hairy rat (even if blue in color) with a long tail is my idea of a horror movie.

The local culinary world is also awaiting "No Reservations." It is about a woman chef (Catherine Zeta Jones) whose workaholic life is derailed by having to care for an orphaned niece and the hiring of a new sous chef (Aaron Echart) whose character is described in a review as "insufferable—and irresistible" (www.movies.com).

It is a remake of "Mostly Martha" that earned high praises from critics because "the acting... is as impeccable as the cooking" (www.rottentomatoes.com).

Cooking stars

Television has hit it big with food shows that chefs have been transformed into superstars. Cable channels like "Food Network" and "Travel & Living" focus on cooking classes and travel cum cooking. It is too bad that you savor the food and experience the travel only vicariously.

So it was quite an experience to be invited to taste the chicken recipe of a local television series.

At the Bacolod Chicken Inasal, they serve a dish from "Ysabella." The *teleserye* stars Judy Ann Santos who plays a cook who inherited the recipe from her mother.

All the conflicts that lengthen the series are centered around the chicken dish called "*kinasal na manok*." At Bacolod Chicken, it is known as Ysabella's chicken.

The recipe was done by Gina Navarro, food stylist, cook and part owner of Estrel's Cakes. Gina combined several ingredients from different parts of the country for the marinade. Those were *tabon-tabon, dayap, bagoong* Balayan and honey.

YSABELLA'S chicken

Once the chicken is marinated in all that in the sufficient time needed for it to absorb the different flavors, it is steamed then fried lightly.

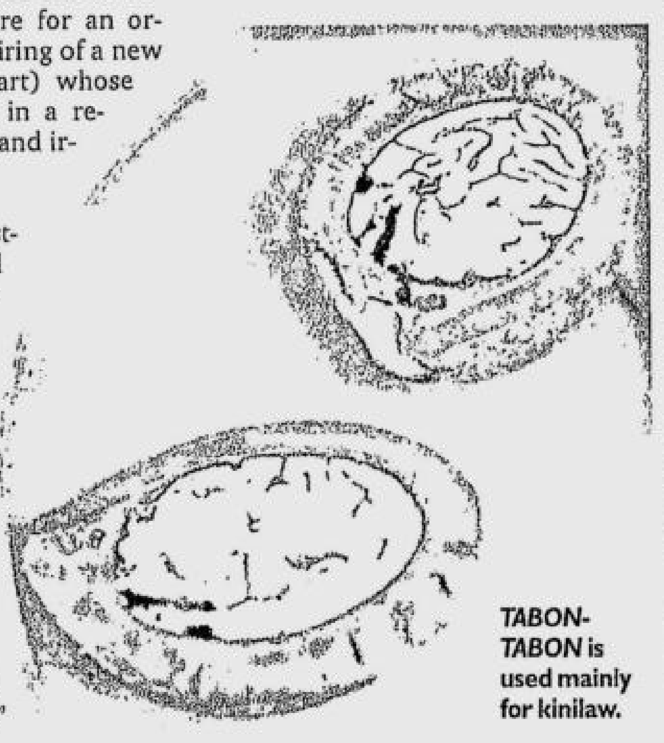
So how did Ysabella's chicken taste? At Bacolod Chicken's Jupiter branch in Makati, the tasting proved that, in spite of all those marinade ingredients, the dish was quite mild, no distinctive flavor.

It was not as salty as the usual fried chicken or slightly sour like the *inasal*. It was served with a light gravy, fried rice colored with *achuete* with fried garlic strewn on top and grilled tomatoes and onion.

So what can be said of those ingredients used to marinate the chicken?

Tabon-tabon (Hydrophytune orbicolatum) is a brown fruit with a hard outer cover that, when cut in half, reveals its white interior with ridges that make it look like brain matter.

The inside is scraped into the *kinilaw* in Cagayan de Oro and Camiguin, giving a white opaque quality to the pieces. It is said the fruit removes the fishy smell of seafood and prevents indigestion.



TABON-TABON is used mainly for kinilaw.

Centuries-old dish

Food anthropologist Doreen Gamboa Fernandez, in her book "Palayok," said *tabon-tabon* was found in a digging in Butuan City, Agusan del Sur together with 10th- to 13th-century yellowfin tuna bones. It just proved, she wrote, that *kinilaw* was one of the oldest dishes of the country.

In Camiguin, the cook at the Highlands Hotel demonstrated the scraping of the soft white interior of the *tabon-tabon* into vinegar or water, mashing then mixing it into the *kinilaw*. Together with an aromatic citrus called *suwa*, the resulting dish was milky and so sweet-smelling.

I told my hosts there that being Tagalog, I was not fond of aromatic dishes. It helps when the *kinilaw* is mixed with *inihaw na baboy* (*sinugba*), becoming a different dish called *sinuglaw*, because the too cloying aroma is tempered.

Dayap (Citrus aurantifolia) is the local lime that has become rare, at least in Manila. It is what gives milk *pastillas* and *leche flan* that wonderfully unique citrus flavor and aroma, subtle but so appealing.

Balayan *bagoong* is the name of the fish paste from Balayan in Batangas. While fish *bagoong* is made in other parts of the country, Balayan has been successfully attached to the product so even if the *bagoong* does not come from there, people presume it does.

Honey, a product from bees, can be had in many parts of the country. In Manila's weekend markets, honey from Palawan is sold. Sometimes, vendors claim they have honey from Mindanao. You have to take that on faith.

It is not enough, however, to take it on faith that Judy Ann is a cook. She has to be convincing in the role and know the moves of a cook to be believable.

That is why Catherine Zeta Jones in "No Reservations" and the creative staff of "Ratatouille" had to train in professional kitchens.

E-mail the author at pinoyfood04@yahoo.com

Sumptuous and satisfying treats

THAT PIZZA PLACE WHERE PEOPLE GO for a variety of pizza crusts—thin, thick, New York crust and Grand Slam—has recently launched the Shakey's Beef n' Onion pizza and the Shakey's Super Seven.

The first is a classic Shakey's pizza, topped with high premium spicy fresh marinated beef and onions, while the other is loaded with cheese, marinated beef, Italian sausage, onions, oyster, shiitake mushrooms and potato strings.

Regular guests relish their favorites—Manager's Choice Thin Crust pizza, Shakey's Special or Garlic and Cheese, as well as the Chick N Chips, a basket of the juicy fried chicken and mojo potatoes. If one is avoiding meat, Mojos are available with two dips.

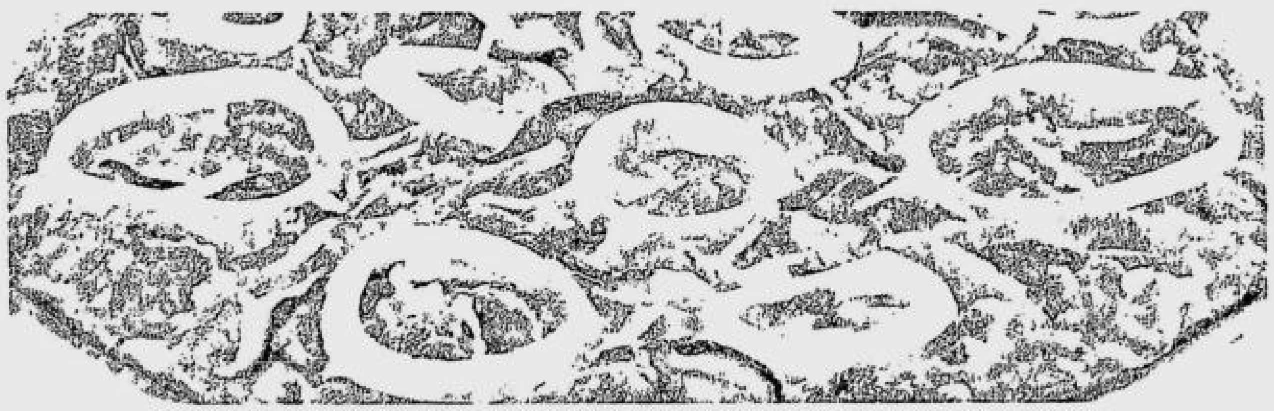
Vegetarians and vegans, on the other hand, can enjoy Garlic and Cheese, Garden or Vegetarian Pizzas. Seafood lovers, too, have a bounty of choices, including Tuna Summer Salad and Friday Special Pizza, which is topped with shrimps and anchovies.

Bigger appetites should sample the Captain's Choice platter of deep-fried fish fillet, Calamari Crunch and Belgian Fries, served with two sauces, garlic ranch dressing and sweet chili sauce.

SHAKEY'S milk shakes are thick and creamy, the way they are really supposed to be.

Those conscious about their weight can sample the garden salad, tuna Caesar and Greek salad.

Shakey's ice cream bar, which offers dozens of toppings, is available at the Alabang, Glorietta, Makati Cinema Square, Katipunan, SM North EDSA and Tomas Morato branches.



PEPPERONI Crrunch is a new favorite for everyone because of the potato strings.

CHOOSE from Greek, Tuna Caesar, or Classic Garden salads because the shakey's summer salads are available the whole year round.

Shakey's has retained the Monster Meatballs pasta and Classic Spaghetti. An addition to the menu is Shakey's Carbonara Supreme, a combination of creamy white sauce and bacon and ham. This concoction is made even more special with toppings of shiitake and oyster mushrooms and parmesan cheese.

The Carbonara Bundle and Shakey's Super Seven offer a choice of Carbonara platter or Shakey's Seven pizza with calamari platter and a pitcher of Iced tea, all for less than P500.

E-mail comments@shakeyspizza.ph or call their hotline 77-777.

VILLAGE BAKER. Carmiña Arroyo turns her kitchen into a cake studio, making people happy with her sweet creations.

A baker's sweet secret

AT A VERY YOUNG AGE, Carmiña Arroyo's curiosity with food brought her into the kitchen to bake cakes and other pastries.

"Back when we were kids, my siblings and I took turns in choosing what restaurant to go to whenever we ate out. I always chose restaurants with delicious desserts," says Arroyo. "It's the last memory of dining, it should linger."

Her love for cakes and desserts led her to take formal education in baking. She studied at the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) in New York and UFM in Thailand, an affiliate of the US Wheat Association. She also trained under a French pastry chef.

Arroyo's cake collection includes cheesecakes, Sans Rival, and chocolate truffle mousse. Unlike mass produced cakes, or what she calls "mechanical cakes," she pays full attention to flavor without using additives and preservatives. She also bakes manually, making her creations very personal and very limited. "That's why my cakes are only available once a day," she says.

Recently, Arroyo came up with a new creation which she considers as her greatest masterpiece in baking—Mocha Manila. This is her version of her favorite cake, the Mocha Praline Cake. It is made of five layers of chocolate cake, mocha chiffon, chocolate mousse, and coffee buttercream with praline.

For Arroyo, the real science of baking is not about following the recipe by the book but knowing how to achieve the quality of cakes and pastries. That's why in all her creations, Arroyo includes a local ingredient.

For Mocha Manila, she uses tablea or native chocolate, her favorite drink when she was a kid. According to her, this is not only to please the unique craving of Filipinos but to help the local food industry as well.

At the end of the day, Arroyo considers baking as a source of happiness. As she watches friends and family enjoy what she has made, Arroyo is happy that her cakes can bring people together. For Arroyo, every cake is a reminder of what life has to offer. Her cakes may be ordered through text at 0917-5375453 and are also available at all Serye branches.

Good Wine Good Food
with
Carlo Rossi
CALIFORNIA RED

Filipino foods are rich
in condiments and sauces.
This explains why rice
is important in the meals,
and why it is difficult to pair
wines with Filipino foods.
But Carlo Rossi California Red's
smooth feel and light and
fruity taste, allow the palate
to sense the distinct features
of Filipino Cuisine.

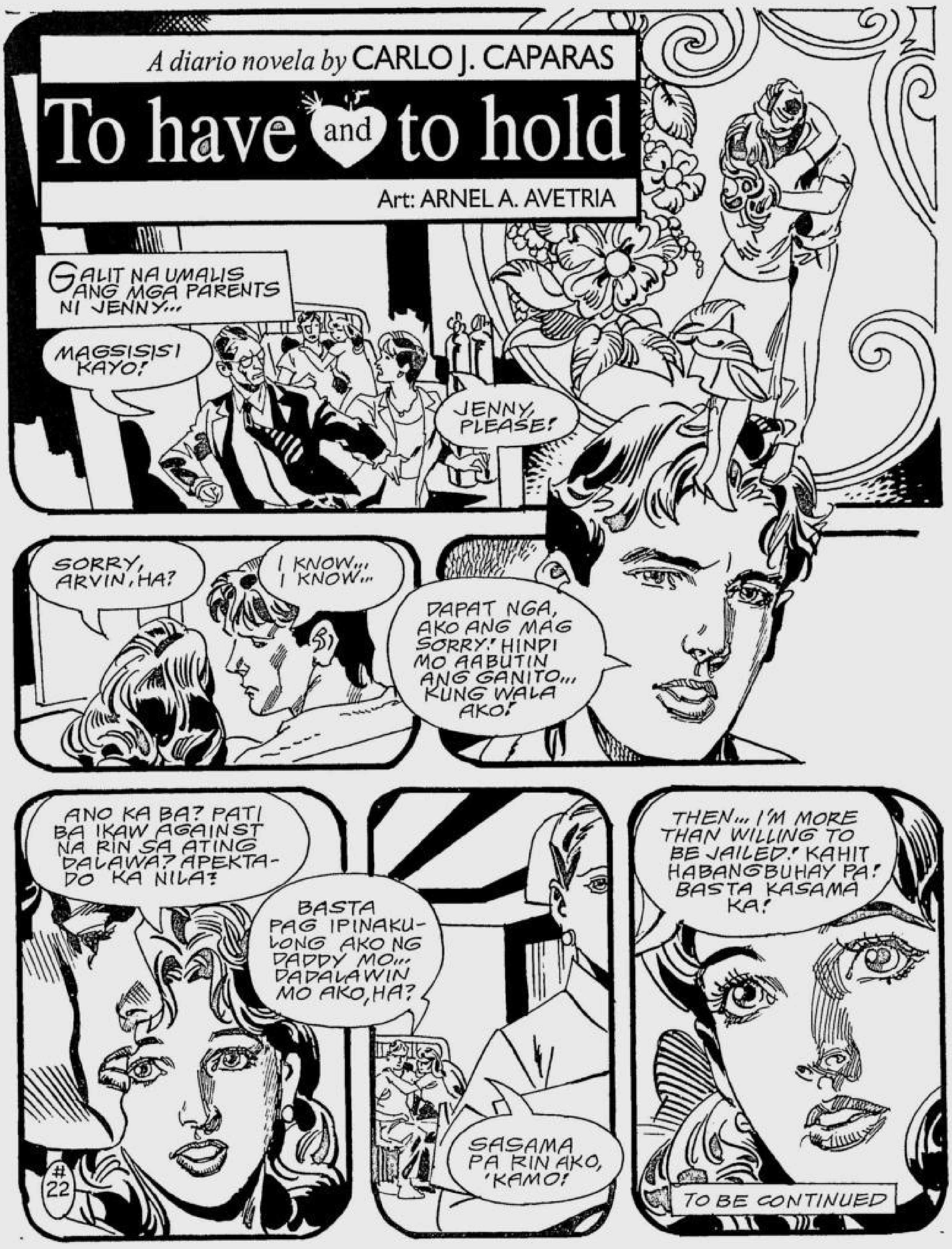
Carlo Rossi
CALIFORNIA RED
No. 1 Imported wine in the Philippines

With Carlo Rossi California Red,
food and wine become a pleasurable experience.

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

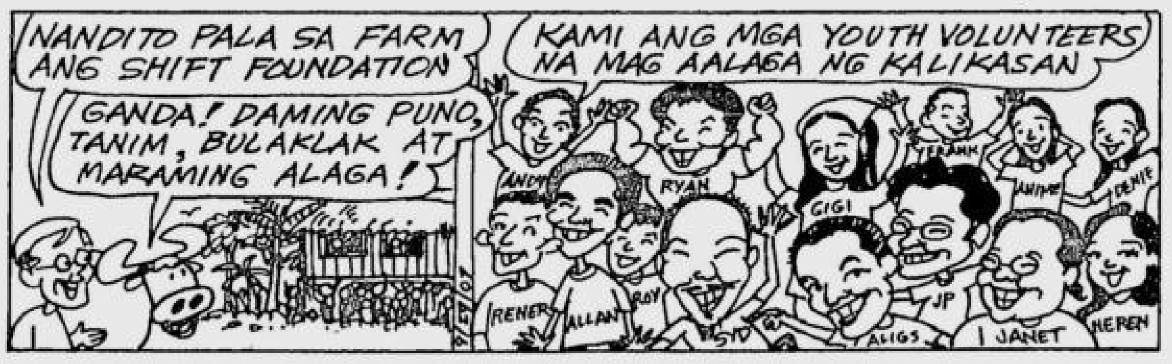
To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


GALIT NA UMALIS ANG MGA PARENTS NI JENNY...
MAGSISISI KAYO!
JENNY, PLEASE!
SORRY, ARVIN, HA?
I KNOW... I KNOW...
DAPAT NGA, AKO ANG MAG SORRY! HINDI MO AABUTIN ANG GANITO... KUNG WALA AKO!
ANO KA BA? PATI BA IKAW AGAINST NA RIN SA ATING DALAWA? APEKTADO KA NILA?
BASTA PAG IPINAKULONG AKO NG DADDY MO... DADALAWIN MO AKO, HA?
SASAMA PA RIN AKO, 'KAMO!
THEN... I'M MORE THAN WILLING TO BE JAILED! KAHIT HABANGBUHAY PA! BASTA KASAMA KA!
#22
TO BE CONTINUED

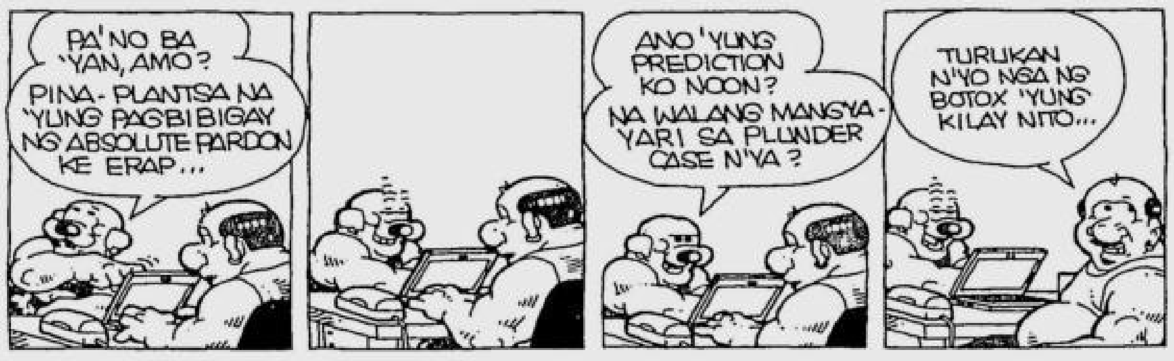
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NANDITO PALA SA FARM ANG SHIFT FOUNDATION
GANDA! DAMING PUNO, TANIM, BULAKLAK AT MARAMING ALAGA!
KAMI ANG MGA YOUTH VOLUNTEERS NA MAG AALAGA NG KALIKASAN
ANDY
RYAN
FRANK
ANIME
DENIE
GIGI
RENER
ALLAN
ROY
STU
ALIGS
JP
JANET
HEREN

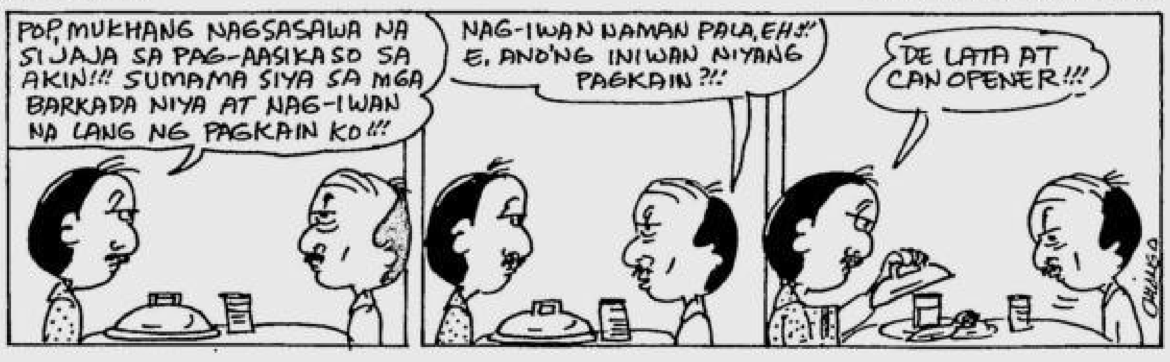
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PA'NO BA 'YAN, AMO?
PINA-PLANTSA NA 'YUNG PAGBIBIGAY NG ABSOLUTE PARDON KE ERAP...
ANO 'YUNG PREDICTION KO NOON?
NA WALANG MANGYAYARI SA PLUNDER CASE N'YA?
TURUKAN N'YO NGA NG BOTOX 'YUNG KILAY NITO...

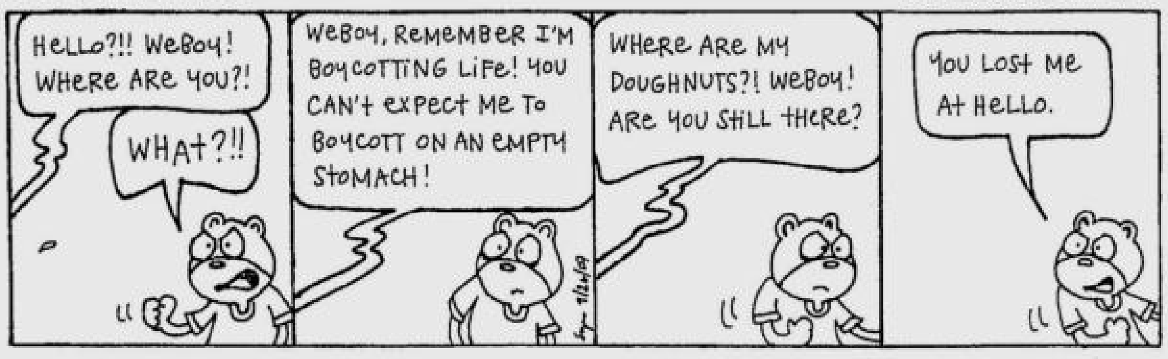
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


POP, MUKHANG NAGSASAWA NA SI JAJA SA PAG-AASIKASO SA AKIN!!! SUMAMA SIYA SA MGA BARKADA NIYA AT NAG-IWAN NA LANG NG PAGKAIN KO!!!
NAG-IWAN NAMAN PALA, EH!! E, ANO'NG INIWAN NIYANG PAGKAIN?!!
DE LATA AT CAN OPENER!!!
CHIONGLO

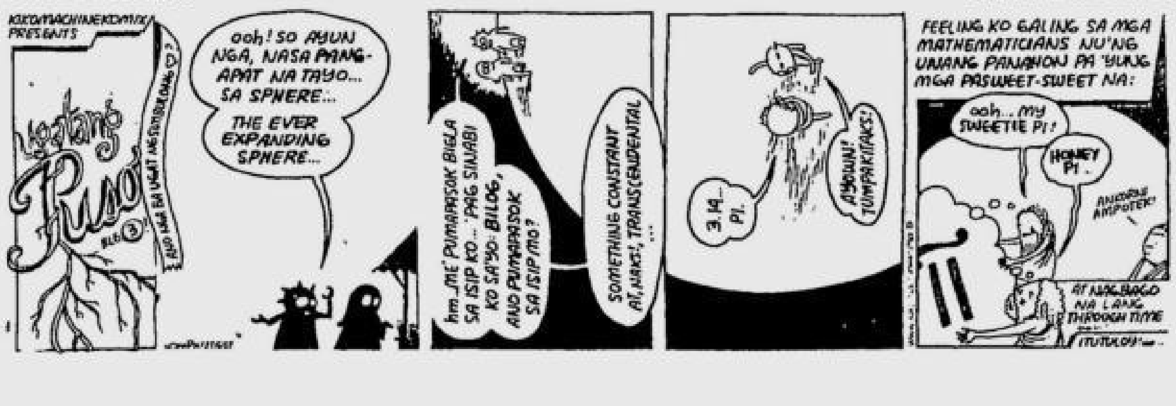
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HeLLo?!! WeBoy! WHeRe ARe You?!
WHAt?!!
WeBoy, ReMeMBeR I'M BoyCOTTING LiFe! You CAN't expect Me To BoyCOTT ON AN eMPTY StoMACH!
WHeRe ARe MY DOUGHNUTS?! WeBoy! ARe You StiLL tHeRe?
You Lost Me At HeLLo.

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


KIKOMACHINEKOMIX PRESENTS
Ligtang Puso
BLG. 3
ANO NGA BA ANG HUGIS NG PUSO KO?
ooh! SO AYUN NGA, NASA PANG-APAT NA TAYO... SA SPHERE...
THE EVER EXPANDING SPHERE...
hm...ME' PUMAPASOK BIGLA SA ISIP KO... 'PAG SINABI KO SA'YO: BILOG, ANO PUMAPASOK SA ISIP MO?
SOMETHING CONSTANT AT, NAKS!, TRANSCENDENTAL...
3.14...PI.
AYOWN! TUMPAK!TAKS!
FEELING KO GALING SA MGA MATHEMATICIANS NU'NG UNANG PANAHON PA 'YUNG MGA PASWEET-SWEET NA:
ooh... MY SWEETIE PI!
HONEY PI.
ANDRRE AMPOTEK!
AT NAGBAGO NA LANG THROUGH TIME
ITUTULOY...

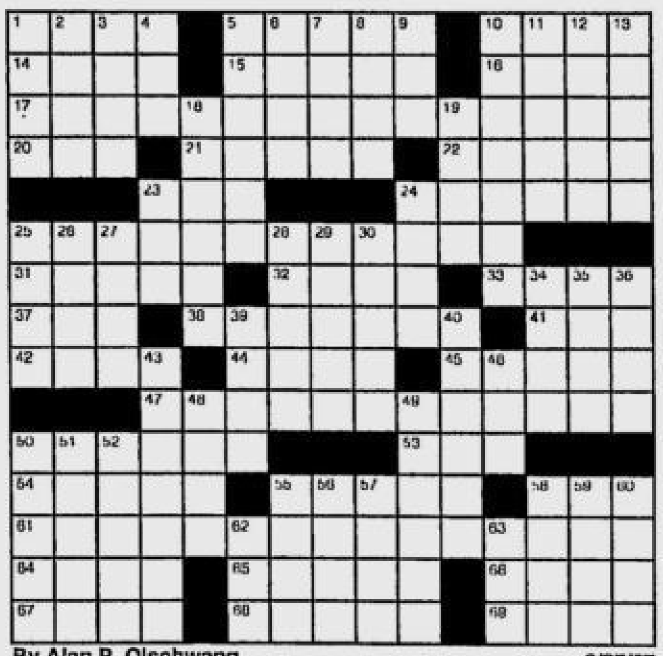
DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Suffer defeat
5 Perfect
10 Join the game
14 Hertz rival
15 Ancient Scandinavian
16 Actress Russo
17 Start of John Barrymore quote
20 "Kidnapped" author's inits.
21 Seductress
22 Newton's fruit?
23 ID info
24 Steady states
25 Part 2 of quote
31 Rhone feeder
32 Hebrew month
33 Cuts short
37 Gasteyer of "SNL"
38 Flag feature
41 Cereal grain
42 Called up
44 After-shower wear
45 Study by Chopin
47 Part 3 of quote
50 Finlay of "Great Expectations"
53 Tic-tac-toe win
54 Shaq or Tatum
55 African language group
58 Tummy muscles
61 End of quote
64 Powerful trend
65 Serious situation
66 Morales of "La Bamba"
67 Mimics
68 Misjudgment
69 Cavort

DOWN

1 Cowardly Lion player
2 Elliptical track
3 Liquid samples
4 6th sense
5 Six-out segment
6 One who performs
7 Scottish Gaelic
8 Org.
9 Guitarist Paul
10 Get ready
11 Abrupt transitions
12 Low joint
13 Affirmative responses
18 Debate topics
19 Eur. defense assn.
23 Male child
24 One and only
25 Former Russian ruler
26 Mandlikova of tennis
27 Colorful mount
28 King of Judea
29 Excuse
30 Bamboozled
34 Part of speech
35 Part of a pedestal
36 Mishmash dish
39 Genuine
40 Arrange for display
43 Operates a Hula-Hoop
46 Boxing letters
48 Pinguid
49 Close by
50 Terra __
51 Not with it
52 "The Cloister and the Hearth" author
55 Prickly husk
56 Banned apple spray
57 Verne captain
58 Lhasa __
59 Ray of light
60 Cut short
62 Poem of praise
63 "__ the fields we go..."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By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

9/27/07

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

A	R	M	S	■	R	A	R	E	■	W	R	A	T	H
S	O	A	P	■	O	W	E	S	■	R	O	D	E	O
H	O	G	A	N	A	N	D	T	R	A	B	E	R	T
E	D	I	T	E	D	■	S	E	E	N	■	N	I	L
■	■	■	S	A	S	S	■	S	A	G	S	■	■	■
T	O	P	■	P	T	A	S	■	P	L	U	M	E	S
A	P	I	A	■	E	L	I	E	■	E	D	I	N	A
P	A	L	M	E	R	A	N	D	F	R	A	S	E	R
A	R	A	B	S	■	S	E	G	O	■	N	E	R	O
S	T	R	I	P	E	■	W	A	R	T	■	R	O	D
■	■	■	T	O	L	D	■	R	E	E	L	■	■	■
A	T	E	■	U	L	E	E	■	C	R	E	A	T	E
W	O	O	D	S	A	N	D	S	A	M	P	R	A	S
E	R	N	I	E	■	I	D	E	S	■	E	G	O	S
D	O	S	E	D	■	S	A	L	T	■	R	O	S	E

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9/27/07

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

					2	5		
	6				7	1		
							9	
		7			4	9	8	
8	5						4	2
	1	3	9			7		
	3							
		5	8				2	
		1	5					

Difficulty Level ★★★

9/27

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Answer to previous puzzle

9	5	3	7	8	1	4	2	6
6	8	4	5	2	9	7	3	1
7	2	1	4	6	3	9	8	5
4	9	2	6	1	8	5	7	3
8	1	5	3	9	7	6	4	2
3	6	7	2	4	5	8	1	9
5	7	8	1	3	6	2	9	4
1	4	6	9	7	2	3	5	8
2	3	9	8	5	4	1	6	7

Difficulty Level ★★★

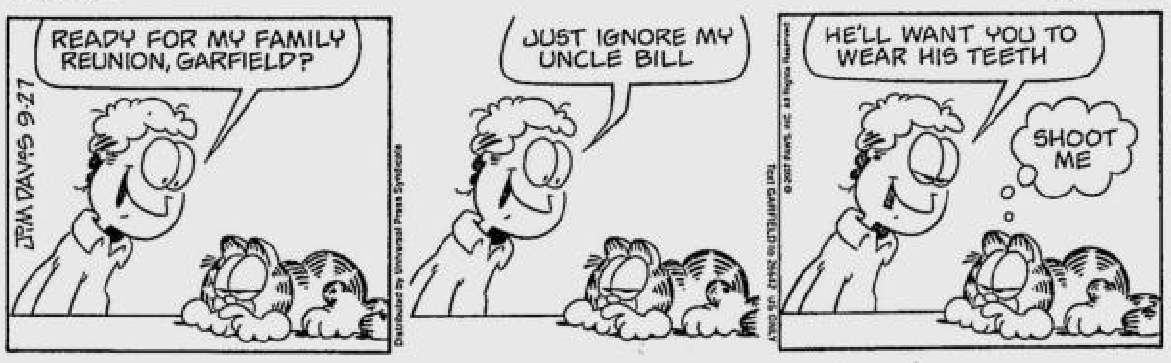
9/26

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


READY FOR MY FAMILY REUNION, GARFIELD?
JIM DAVIS 9-27
JUST IGNORE MY UNCLE BILL
HE'LL WANT YOU TO WEAR HIS TEETH
SHOOT ME

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You make an excellent companion to others. You love luxury and beauty in relaxed surroundings. You like to entertain people. You particularly admire intelligence in others. You have humanitarian values, and often work for reform in society or in the workplace. In the coming year, you will let go of something you've been involved with for about nine years.

Birthdate of: Avril Lavigne, singer; Liz Torres, actress; Randy Bachman, musician.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): In the next few weeks, your ability to research financial matters is excellent. You can get to the bottom of something if you're looking for it.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): In the next two months, you'll have serious discussions with partners and close friends. Expect to run into ex-partners and people you haven't seen for a while.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Today your ruler, Mercury, moves into Scorpio, where it soon will go retrograde. Try to get as much done now as possible. A peridd of confusion and silly delays awaits you in October.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Old flames are going to start coming out of the woodwork. People from your past, even children, are going to be back on the scene again soon.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Family reunions and the like will take place in the next six weeks. Relatives you haven't seen for a while will be camped on your doorstep, eating you out of house and home. (Oops.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Pay your phone bill. Stay on top of car repairs. In the next few weeks, you will suffer from delays and breakdowns in communication and transportation.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Partners and people from your past are going to be back in your face again. This could be a chance for you to clean up old financial matters.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your desire to communicate with others and enlighten them about your thoughts and feelings is strong now. You're keen to talk to people.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Some of you will discover some juicy secrets in the next few weeks. A hidden part of your chart is going to be revealed to you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Friends from your past are back in your life again now and in the next few weeks. This is a great time to review your goals and dreams for the future.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You might hear from bosses or even parents you haven't heard from for a while. Authority figures from your past are going to revisit your life once again.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): In the next few months, you can wrap up educational matters or anything connected with publishing and the media. Finally, there's a light at the end of the tunnel, and it isn't a train!

ERTAINMENT

Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

ame/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Top 10 at the box office

US revenues for Sept. 21-23

Dollar figures in millions

Sony Pictures

	Weekend gross	Gross to date	Weeks in release	Theaters
1. Resident Evil Extinction	$23.7	$23.7	1	2,8[illegible]
2. Good Luck Chuck	$13.7	$13.7	1	2,6[illegible]
3. The Brave One	$7.3	$25.0	2	2,7[illegible]
4. 3:10 To Yuma	$6.2	$37.7	3	2,9[illegible]
5. Eastern Promises	$5.6	$8.4	2	1,4[illegible]
6. Sydney White	$5.2	$5.2	1	2,1[illegible]
7. Mr Woodcock	$4.9	$15.6	2	2,2[illegible]
8. Superbad	$3.1	$116.2	6	2,3[illegible]
9. The Bourne Ultimatum	$2.9	$220.2	8	2,0[illegible]
10. Dragon Wars (D-War)	$2.6	$8.7	2	2,2[illegible]

SOURCE: Media By Numbers, LLC

AP

Ara: Don't underestimate me

She knows exactly how to sing the nat'l anthem, the fiery actress insists

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ARA MINA IS CLEARLY UPSET.

In spite of the laughs and revelry on the set of GMA 7's "Bubble Gang," the singer-actress can't hide her annoyance.

She can't understand why she's being linked, romantically, with boxer Manny Pacquiao, her leading man in the Metro Manila Film Festival entry "Anak ng Kumander."

When her name was mentioned as possible singer of the Philippine National Anthem for Pacquiao's rematch with Mexico's Marco Antonio Barrerra in Las Vegas on Oct. 6, she was again deluged with intrigues. This one came with snide remarks.

She demands: "Why are people underestimating me? I am no *biritera* (belter), but 'Lupang Hinirang' is not meant to be belted. It was [composed] by Julian Felipe as a march."

She insists that it wasn't her idea in the first place. "The promoters know that I do concerts abroad [and] I was asked to audition."

She thought nothing of trying out, and isn't perturbed now that R&B singer Kyla has gotten the nod. (This was confirmed by Wilson Tieng of Solar Sports.)

"I'm happy for Kyla. She's a good singer—and a friend. I know she'll do well," Ara tells INQUIRER Entertainment.

She is still unsure of watching the Vegas fight. "My friend Rustom [Padilla] is persuading me to join him [after which] we're also planning to go to New York."

Whether she's going to Vegas, she insists, will depend on her work schedule, and will not be affected by the idle chatter concerning Pacman.

"It's stressful," she admits. "It's as if every move I make involves Manny."

She understands why Manny's wife Jinkee got affected by the controversies. "I feel for her and her family. I'd like to meet her, so we can put this behind us."

She was bothered by the rumor that she earned P3 million for "Kumander," she says. "I'm not hung up on talent fee. If I were, I wouldn't be doing independent movies like 'Selda.'"

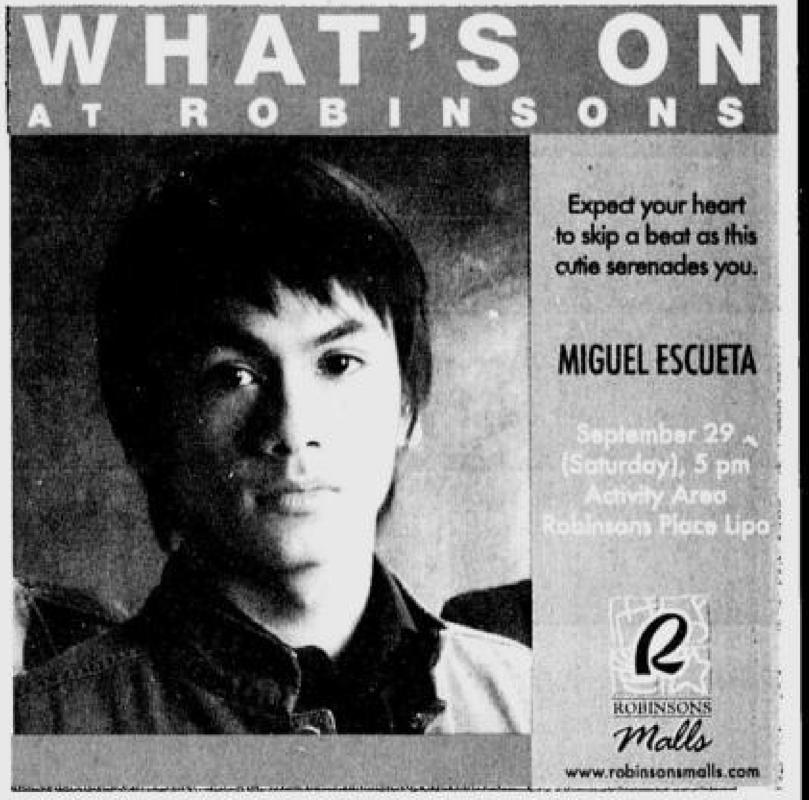
Just as distressing for her was the news that her kissing scene with Manny took nine takes.

"That was exaggerated," she explains. "My love scene with Sid [Lucero] in 'Selda' was more torrid, but it wasn't played up in the media."

She's clearly proud of her work in that movie, directed by Paolo Villaluna and Ellen Ramos. "In one scene, I had to cry for five minutes straight."

Ara is also thinking of producing her own indie digital movie, with sister Cristine Reyes as co-star.

"As producer," quips Big Sis, "I'll make sure she won't get exploited."



WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

Expect your heart to skip a beat as this cutie serenades you.

MIGUEL ESCUETA

September 29 (Saturday), 5 pm
Activity Area
Robinsons Place Lipa

ROBINSONS Malls
www.robinsonsmalls.com

Vhong 'Lastikman' Navarro has his own hero

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

ABS-CBN BRINGS TOGETHER some of local television's brightest stars, like Cherie Gil, Zsa Zsa Padilla and Dawn Zulueta, to bring to life another Filipino comic super-hero via its newest *fantaserye*, "Lastikman."

Vhong Navarro plays the title role. Who's *his* hero in real life?

"God," Vhong quips. "I owe Him everything I am today."

Isn't he wary of suffering by comparison to Vic Sotto, who previously played "Lastikman"?

"I'd like to believe that Bossing and I have different styles. I look up to him."

Who does he consider his closest rival then? "I compete only with myself," says Vhong. Just like the elastic super-hero that he plays, Vhong's talents comes in so many forms. That makes him formidable!

***

Even if Dennis Trillo's co-stars in Zaido are newcomers Marky Cielo and Aljur Abrenica, he doesn't feel pressured that the *telefantasya's* success depends on him since he is the more established star.

"We learn from each other," says Dennis. "They are both very promising actors."

Dennis knows only too well that every expert was once a beginner. A sure sign that an actor has arrived is his being humble enough to help out newbies. That's exactly what Dennis is doing for Marky and Aljur.

***

Could it be true that Manny Pacquiao's wife Jinkee wasn't too keen about having Ara Mina sing the National Anthem at Pacman's match in Vegas... and so Kyla is doing it instead? Manny is rumored to be wooing Ara. There's even crazy talk that Ara's new mansion is a gift from Pacman.

It could all be a gimmick to generate interest in Ara and Manny's coming movie. But if the rumor refuses to die, there may be some truth to it. As Pacman pledges allegiance to the Philippine flag before his bout with Barrera, will he also be affirming his fidelity to Jinkee in his heart?

***

Being the true and modern Pinay that KC Concepcion is, she's the perfect endorser for Bayo. Her sense of style is not boxed up. She can be a *fashionista*, preppy, a classic or rugged dresser—just like Bayo's new assortment mix to be launched in October. KC's Parisian experience has definitely made her what the French call BCBG—"*Bon chic, bon genre.*"

***

A timely health program, "Makabayang Duktor Season 2," which aims to help the poor, will premiere on RPN 9, Sept. 28, at 4:30 p.m., hosted by a husband-and-wife team, Dr. Willie and Dr. Liza Ong. They envision the show to be

VHONG/ E2

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I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30

NO RESERVATION
1:50 / 4:30 / 7:10 / 9:50

RESIDENT EVIL : EXTINCTION
12:10 / 2:35 / 5:00 / 6:50 / 7:25 / 9:15 / 9:50

THE BRAVE ONE
2:00 / 4:25

I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
1:50 / 6:30

DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

I 'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40

ROUGE ASSASSIN
4:10 / 9:00

NO RESERVATION
1:00 / 3:40 / 6:20 / 9:00

ANIMALL CINEMAS

DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

RESIDENT EVIL : EXTINCTION
1:05 / 3:30 / 5:55 / 8:20

SHOOT EM UP
1:05 / 3:25 / 5:45 / 8:05

I 'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
12:10 R4 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30

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3 pm ATENEO vs DE LA SALLE Srs

BILLY CRAWFORD - IT'S TIME
October 6, Saturday 8 pm

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

Guyana survivors on Discovery

ON NOV. 18, 1978, OVER 900 men, women and children—followers of messianic pastor Jim Jones—were victims of a mass murder in the jungles of Guyana, South America.

CLICK!

Before the deaths, US Congressman Leo J. Ryan, his assistants, a group of concerned relatives and an NBC crew had gone to investigate the mysterious cult.

For three days, the cult put a remarkable show. But when Ryan and his party were about to leave, 12 members begged to go with them.

When the congressman confronted Jones, tension escalated and members of Ryan's group were gunned down by the pastor's bodyguards.

Two hours after the shootings, Jones gave orders for "The Grand Departure," a mass suicide. Most of the cultists were force-fed a grape drink laced with poison; others were shot, or given a lethal injection.

Four survivors of the massacre tell their story in 'Jonestown: Paradise Lost" on Oct. 14, 9 p.m. on Discovery Channel.

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1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
11:00 , 1:20 , 3:40
6:00 , 8:20 , 10:35
GP

2 RESIDENT EVIL
11:30 , 2:05 , 4:40
7:15 , 9:50
R-13

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING

3 RESIDENT EVIL
12:00 , 2:35 , 5:10
7:45 , 10:20
R-13

4 CHUCK & LARRY
12:00 , 2:40 , 5:20
8:00 , 10:35
R-13

5 NO RESERVATIONS
10:40 , 1:00 , 3:20
5:40 , 8:00 , 10:20
PG-13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM	September 29, 2007	Sugarfree	8:00 PM
	October 08 & 09, 2007	"Alamat" Stageplay	9:00 AM / 1:00 & 5:00 PM
TEATRINO	Sep. 27, Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	Cerrudo Classico	8:00 PM
	October 25, 2007	Ogie Alcasid	8:00 PM
	October 26, 2007	John Lesaca	8:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL 721-6726 OR 721-0635

THE WILL TO WIN
PACQUIAO vs BARRERA II
TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE
OCTOBER 7, 2007 8:00 AM
WATCH IT AT PROMENADE CINEMA
SOLAR

Hairloss is wrecking her life and she doesn't know why.

Thinning hair makes a woman look older. When your hair's health, shine and bounce weaken, it seems your personality is likewise affected. Self-consciousness, diminished self-esteem, even bouts of depression may occur.

Most women who have gone through this harrowing experience say they tried everything to stop hairloss, from special treatments at the salon, to a whole range of over-the-counter products. But nothing worked. Sadly, many "remedies" may have actually made the condition worse. Until they found out the reason why they were losing hair, little could be done to end the problem.

Possible reasons for hairloss.

Women's hairloss can be caused by hormonal changes. Female Pattern Baldness (or Androgenetic Alopecia) is a reaction to male hormones in the body (androgens) which can weaken a woman's hair. Other factors can be stress, poor nutrition, illnesses and reaction to certain medications, childbirth and menopause, frequent coloring, curling, straightening, and many more. Most causes of hairloss, when they are correctly identified, can be treated with good results.

Getting the facts on why you are losing hair.

Trichology is the study of the functions and problems of hair. A trichologist is someone who has been educated in the subject and is qualified to determine the reasons why your hair is not in good health.

Where do you find a trichologist? One name that has been synonymous with Professional Trichology in the Philippines for more than 25 years: Svenson. Svenson trichologists will examine your hair and scalp and give you advice on what to do.

A trichologist - what does it cost?

Nothing. Svenson trichologists offer an in-depth Hair & Scalp analysis totally free of charge.

Pre-hairloss symptoms.

Before your hair starts falling out, be aware of early warning signs such as persistent dandruff, flaking, and scalp irritations. Beat hairloss - see a trichologist when you see these signs!

These visible indications are embarrassing, and when combined with dirt in the atmosphere, shampoo chemicals or excess oiliness, they can block follicles, badly affecting hair growth.

Treatments to help your hair.

Depending on the findings of your Hair & Scalp analysis, you can decide on treatment programs including:

ULTRA HAIR REINFORCER - deep-cleans scalp, creates healthier environment for growth. Hair becomes thicker, shinier, more lush.

ULTRA-LUSH VOLUMIZER - quickly controls and stops hair fall, helps restore original lushness, volume and softness.

SCALP-CORRECTIVE- eliminates dandruff, flaking and other irritations, returns scalp to normal state, prevents imminent hairloss.

Make an appointment today to see a trichologist free of charge.
Call Svenson at 892-4247/ 234-0851(Cebu).

Predictable but quite palatable

REVIEW

NEW YORK—In "No Reservations," a perfect metaphor for the movie itself is the plate of frozen fish sticks that Catherine Zeta-Jones' gourmet chef, Kate, fixes when her 9-year-old niece, Zoe, refuses to eat.

They're just fish sticks but the way she arranges them makes them seem appealing.

You've seen all this before. But everyone involved is so pedigreed, so capable, they make the experience go down easy.

Scott Hicks is the director; Stuart Dryburgh provides the warm, elegant cinematography. And of course there is the cast, which also features Aaron Eckhart, Abigail Breslin, Bob Balaban and Patricia Clarkson. You can't go wrong with these people.

Control freak

Kate is an uptight control freak whose temper is as famous as the dishes she whips up at an upscale restaurant in Manhattan.

Zoe (an increasingly adorable Breslin from "Little Miss Sunshine") helps with that by moving into her apartment after Kate's sister is killed in a car crash. She prepares duck for Zoe's lunch and wonders why the girl won't eat it. (Her therapist, played by Balaban, suggests the fish sticks.) Eventually Kate and Zoe arrive at a peaceful, if awkward, co-existence.

But then there's Nick (the shaggy, square-jawed Eckhart), a hunky sous chef who moves into her kitchen and, eventually, her heart. He loves to blare opera and tells lots of jokes, which keeps everyone around him upbeat. (Clarkson plays the restaurant owner.)

Kate returns from bereavement leave and is appalled by the invasion. Nick will prove that he's too good to be true, though, in every regard. They're such opposites, they clash. But their banter will morph into romance.

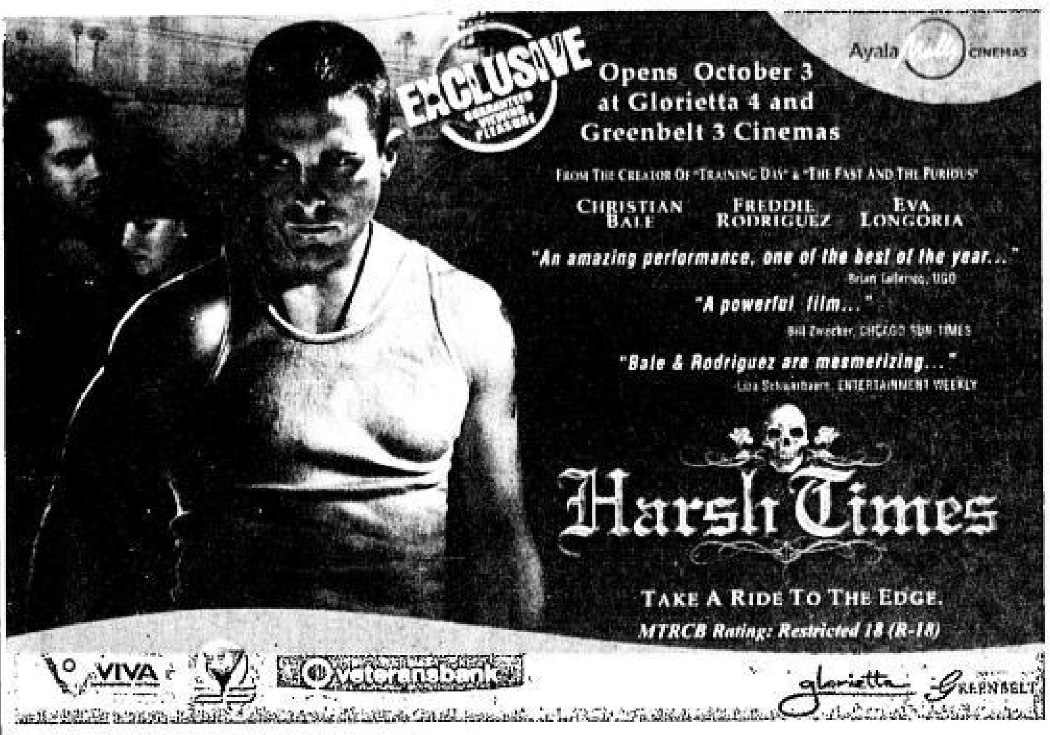
Uneasy fit

This leads to obligatory cutesy montages of this newfound trio bonding. Zeta-Jones and Eckhart are an uneasy fit, but they make the most of it.

> Zeta-Jones and Eckhart are an uneasy fit, but they make the most of it

The ads for "No Reservations" accentuate the light, flirty moments. Actually, the film is much more gut-wrenching than it looks, especially when director Hicks trains the camera on Breslin's wise, sensitive face. While the character was written to be precocious, Breslin has a disarming stillness and sincerity about her. If she doesn't get to you at least once, you may want to check your pulse. AP

AARON Eckhart and Catherine Zeta-Jones as a cooking twosome



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"An amazing performance, one of the best of the year..."
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"Bale & Rodriguez are mesmerizing..."
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TAKE A RIDE TO THE EDGE.
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R-18)
VIVA veteransbank glorietta GREENBELT

Vhong 'Lastikman' Navarro has his own hero

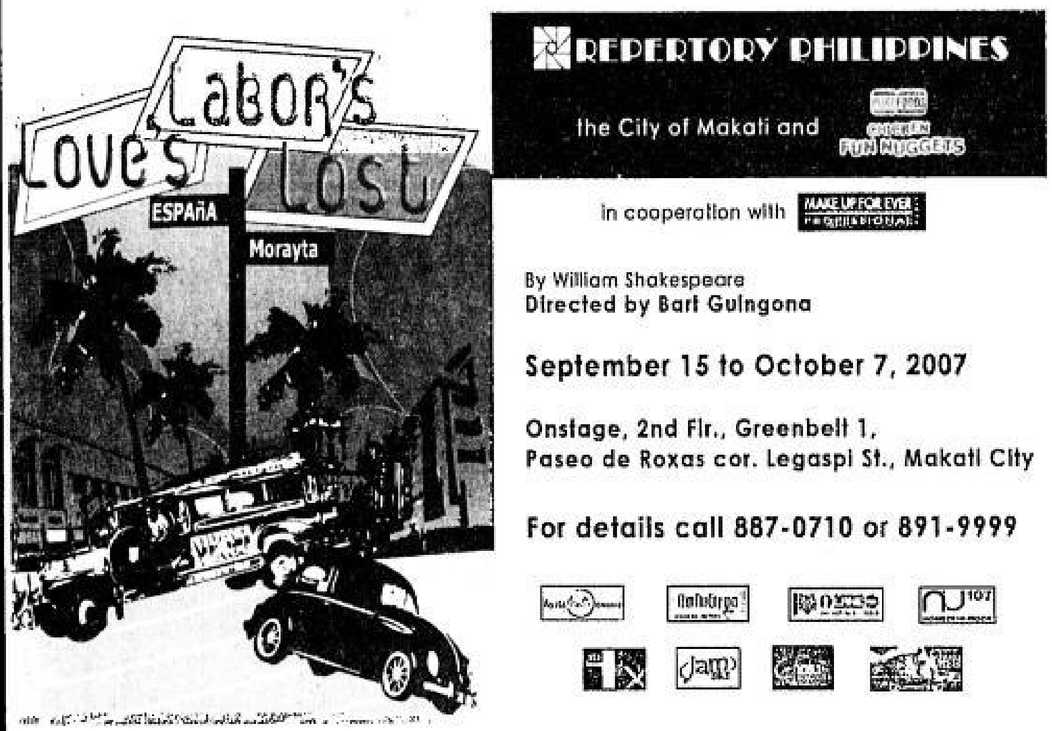
From page E1

a new version of "Kapwa Ko, Mahal Ko." It's similar to Gawad Kalinga's 50K for a house. For "MD," it's 20K for a life. (Call 831-1866 or log on to docwillieandliza.com for details). Why not give life on Christmas day?

* * *

The Belo Medical Group proudly presents, "Black and White," a back-to-back concert with two world champions—singer Jon Joven and pianist Angelo Ortiz—on Sept. 29, 6 p.m. at The Podium 2nd Level. The invitational performance is a special treat for Belo's elite circle of Obagi Gold members.

E-Mail wateringholeshangri-la@yahoo.com.



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By William Shakespeare
Directed by Bart Guingona
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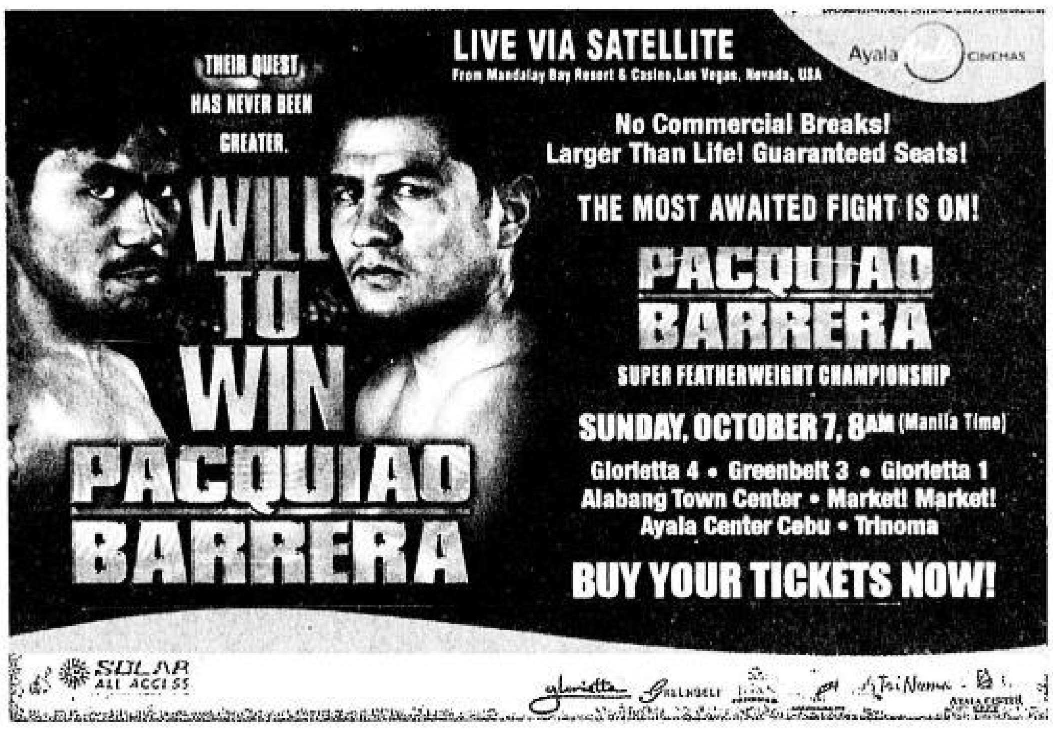
Onstage, 2nd Flr., Greenbelt 1,
Paseo de Roxas cor. Legaspi St., Makati City
For details call 887-0710 or 891-9999



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GLORIETTA 1	1 NO RESERVATIONS	2 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	3 ROGUE ASSASIN	4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
GLORIETTA 4	1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	2 I NOW PONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	3 THX RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 SHOOT 'EM UP	5 THE BRAVE ONE	6 NO RESERVATIONS	7 JOSHUA
GREENBELT 1	1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	2 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION		
GREENBELT 3	1 THX NO RESERVATIONS GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 JOSHUA GUARANTEED SEATS	4 SHOOT 'EM UP GUARANTEED SEATS	5 I NOW PONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY GUARANTEED SEATS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	2 NO RESERVATIONS		
	3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	4 ROGUE ASSASIN	5 ROGUE ASSASIN	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	3 I NOW PONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY	4 DAYWATCH
MARKET! MARKET!	1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	2 I NOW PONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY		
	3 ROGUE ASSASIN	4 RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION	5 NO RESERVATIONS	
TRINOMA • THX Certified • All-Digital Sound • All-Stadium Seating • Computerized Ticketing System • Recliner Seats	1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU	2 ROGUE ASSASIN	3 I NOW PONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY GUARANTEED SEATS	4 NO RESERVATIONS GUARANTEED SEATS
	5 SHOOT 'EM UP	6 THE BRAVE ONE	7 THX RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION GUARANTEED SEATS	

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

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Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782: 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

glorietta	BPI Appliance Madness September 26 to October 16 at Glorietta Activity Center
GREENBELT	Jazz Nights September 26, 2007 at the Greenbelt 2 Al Fresco
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Town Cheers Competition September 22 & 23, 2007 at the Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Elliot Yamin of American Idol Live! September 26; 6 pm; OnStage (Cinema 1)
MARKET! MARKET!	Toyota Showcase September 28 to 30, 2007; at the Activity Center
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST September 15 - October 7, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710 or visit www.repertory-philippines.com
Ayala MUSEUM	FORMS & SPACES: An Exhibition by MAIA & Aaron Bautista September 10 to 27, 2007; ArtistSpace For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
Tri Noma	Mother Care Exhibit September 16 to 30; 10 am to 9 pm; Restoration Area, Level 3

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GUARANTEED VIEWING PLEASURE
NOW ON ITS 2ND WEEK
AT GLORIETTA 4
and GREENBELT 3 CINEMAS
"A superbly crafted psychological thriller."
Owen Gleiberman, ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY
"A brilliant house-horror tale with Hitchcockean flair."
Duane Byrge, THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER
Sam Rockwell Vera Farmiga
joshua
Not all children are innocent.
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

Catch American Idol finalist Elliott Yamin in a live concert at the Ayala Malls!
TriNoma
Activity Center
September 21
7:00pm
Glorietta
Activity Center
September 22
7:00pm
Market! Market!
Activity Center
September 23
6:00pm
Ayala Center Cebu
On Stage
September 26
6:00pm
Alabang Town Center
Activity Center
September 28
6:30pm
ABC MYX
glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

FEEDBACK

Keep 'Idol' judges

FROM Moli Gailan (molichild@hotmail.com), 844 Crittenden St. NE Washington, D.C. 20017:

Now that GMA 7 has bagged "Philippine Idol," may I suggest that they retain the three judges on the show—Pilita Corrales, Ryan Cayabyab and Francis Magalona. If possible, get Paolo Bediones as host, since he has the gift of gab and speaks English and Tagalog fluently. Regine Velasquez will be a poor choice, since it takes so much effort for her to speak in English.

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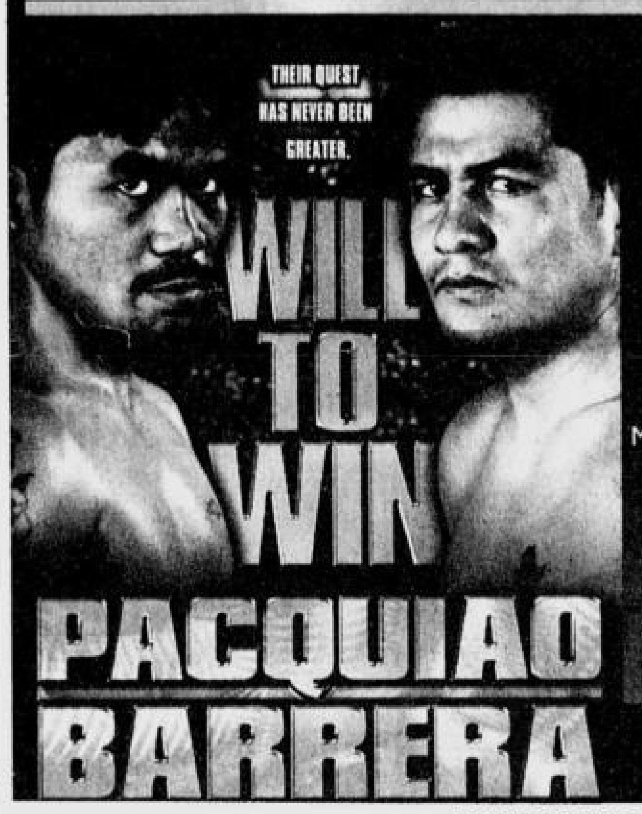
THEIR QUEST HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER.
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PACQUIAO
BARRERA

Watch our country's very own Manny Pacquiao collide with Marco Antonio Barrera in a 12-round super featherweight fight on the big screen
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SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104

SAN MIGUEL Coca-Cola IMAX

DEEP SEA 3D Admission Price: P250
1:00 PM • 2:30 PM • 5:30 PM • 7:00PM • 8:30PM
ANT BULLY Admission Price: P250
4:00PM

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 NO RESERVATIONS
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 UNDERDOG
6 SHOOT EM' UP/I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

PREMIERE CINEMA
I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
CENTERSTAGE
RESIDENT EVIL
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
Bookings now accepted. Inquire at 556-2314.

THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
RESIDENT EVIL
CINEMA 2
NO RESERVATION
For ticket reservations, dial 6338976
All major credit cards accepted

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452

1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 NO RESERVATIONS
4 RESIDENT EVIL
5 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
6 RESIDENT EVIL
7 NO RESERVATIONS
8 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
9 UNDERDOG
10 1408
11 SHOOT EM' UP
12 RUSH HOUR 3

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
6 NO RESERVATION
7 THE HOST
8 1408
9 RESIDENT EVIL
10 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
11 SHOOT EM' UP
12 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 THE HOST
2 UNDERDOG
3 A LOVE STORY
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 THE BRAVE ONE
6 SHOOT EM' UP
7 RESIDENT EVIL
8 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
9 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
10 1408
11 NO RESERVATION
12 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 NO RESERVATION
5 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
6 THE BRAVE ONE
7 SHOOT EM' UP
8 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
9 1408
10 UNDERDOG

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 1408
5 NO RESERVATION
6 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 NO RESERVATION
6 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
7 UNDERDOG
8 SHOOT EM' UP
9 A LOVE STORY

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARR•
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 SHOOT EM' UP
3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 NO RESERVATION
6 RESIDENT EVIL
7 1408
8 RUSH HOUR 3
9 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
10 DISTURBIA
11 UNDERDOG
12 THE BRAVE ONE

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04

1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 DISTURBIA
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

1 RESIDENT EVIL
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
2 UNDERDOG
3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 THE HOST
5 ROGUE ASSASSIN
6 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
7 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
8 SHOOT EM' UP

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY
4 RUSH HOUR 3
5 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
6 SKINWALKERS

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 UNDERDOG
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 DISTURBIA
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 SKINWALKERS
4 DAYWATCH

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85

1 SKINWALKERS
2 THE BRAVE ONE
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 UNDERDOG
5 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY
6 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

SM CITY LIPA (043) 784-0187

1 DISTURBIA
2 DAYWATCH
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 DISTURBIA
3 SKINWALKERS
4 NANCY DREW

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39

1 NANCY DREW
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160

1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 RESIDENT EVIL
3 NO RESERVATION
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811

1 THE LAST LEGION/NANCY DREW
2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 I'VE FALEN FOR YOU
4 DISTURBIA
5 THE LAST LEGION
6 RESIDENT EVIL

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884

1 THE LAST LEGION
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 OSS 117
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 UNDERDOG
2 **RESERVED**
3 SKINWALKERS
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
5 THE BRAVE ONE
6 ROGUE ASSASSIN
7 **RESERVED**
8 THE LAST LEGION

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 THE BRAVE ONE
2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY
3 RESIDENT EVIL
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
6 THE HOST
7 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
8 THE LAST LEGION

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010

1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN
3 NANCY DREW
4 DISTURBIA

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

MOVIEWORLD

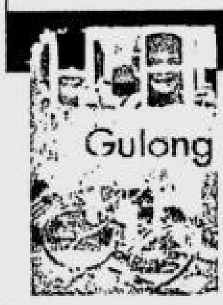
www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY • THX
2 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 indieSine: GULONG
4 ROGUE ASSASSIN
5 RESIDENT EVIL 3
6 NO RESERVATION
7 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
RESIDENT EVIL 3
8 SHOOT 'EM UP
9 ANG LALAKE SA PAROLA
10 THE BRAVE ONE

A FILM BY SOCKIE FERNANDEZ



GULONG is a moving love story of a couple separated by time, who find themselves together again in the sunset of their lives. It is about friendship, love and life. The story is told from the point of view of Apao, a smart, kindhearted boy whose quest for an old bicycle reveals the stuff he is made of.

watch this only at Robinsons Movieworld Galleria
MTRCB Rating: G September 22 to October 02

ERMITA

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
RESIDENT EVIL 3
3 SHOOT 'EM UP
4 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY
5 NO RESERVATION
6 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
7 ROGUE ASSASSIN

Watch LIVE via SATELLITE

Robinsons Movieworld
GALLERIA • MANILA
METRO EAST

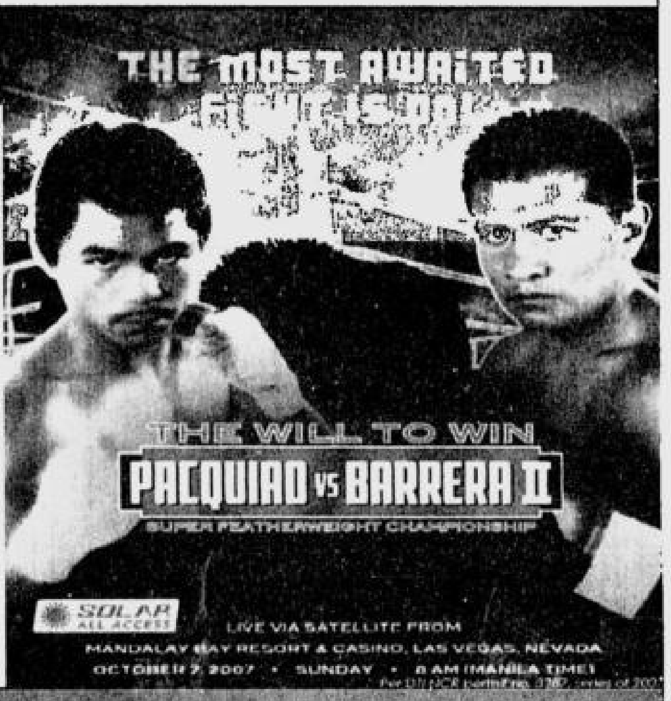
OCTOBER 7 • Sunday
8:00AM

TICKET PRICE: P600

FREE hotdog, popcorn and drink for every ticket purchased

TICKETS are available at the ticket booth

For inquiries, pls. call the Marketing Services Dept.: 395-2188 locs. 230 / 240


THE MOST AWAITED
THE WILL TO WIN
PACQUIAO vs BARRERA II
SUPER FEATHERWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP
SOLAR ALL ACCESS
LIVE VIA SATELLITE FROM
MANDALAY BAY RESORT & CASINO, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
OCTOBER 7, 2007 • SUNDAY • 8 AM (MANILA TIME)

METRO EAST

Ticket Price: P100 / P110 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
3 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 NO RESERVATION
5 ROGUE ASSASSIN
6 SHOOT 'EM UP
7 THE BRAVE ONE
8 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
RESIDENT EVIL 3

NOVALICHES

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 NO RESERVATION
4 SHOOT 'EM UP

PIONEER

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 NO RESERVATION
4 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY

STA ROSA

Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (049) 837-0907

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
3 NANCY DREW
4 THE LAST LEGION

LIPA

(043) 757-3654 (043) 312-5870

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 DISTURBIA
3 DAYWATCH
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

DASMARINAS

Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (046) 416-4332

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 DISTURBIA
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 RESIDENT EVIL 3

IMUS

(046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 RESIDENT EVIL 3
2 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 ROGUE ASSASSIN
4 THE HOST

ANGELES

(045) 892-2346

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 SKINWALKERS
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
4 THE BRAVE ONE

TARLAC

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 DISTURBIA
3 DAYWATCH

STARMILLS

(045) 875-1927

1 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 SKINWALKERS
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY
4 THE BRAVE ONE
5 ROGUE ASSASSIN
6 RUSH HOUR 3

BACOLOD

Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

1 LIGAW LIHAM
2 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 DISTURBIA
4 NANCY DREW
5 ROGUE ASSASSIN
6 WAITRESS

ILOILO

(033) 336-8070

1 SKINWALKERS
2 I HAVE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 UNDERDOG
4 THE BRAVE ONE
5 ROGUE ASSASSIN
6 STOMP THE YARD

Barbie's back!

BARBIE Almalbis

IT'S BEEN 10 years since Barbie Almalbis first broke into the scene, first as rhythm guitarist-lead singer-songwriter of the band Hungry Young Poets, then as leader of Barbie's Cradle, before deciding to go solo in 2006.

All throughout she never lost the wispy vocal style that gave her songs a dream-like quality.

Last year, Barbie took a break to get married and become a mother, too.

But now she's back, raring to play more music, and inviting her fans to her 10th anniversary celebration concert on Sept. 29 at the Eastwood Central Plaza, Libis, Quezon City.

Merk's 5th anniversary

Route 70 and Rachel Anne Wolfe are the featured performers tonight at the 5th anniversary celebration of Merk's Bar Bistro, Greenbelt 3, Makati.

PnE's US tour

A few days after its concert at the Folk Arts Theater, Parokya ni Edgar went on US tour with Kamikazee.

The bands perform tomorrow at the Congress Theater, Chicago; Sept. 29 the Landmark in New Jersey; and Sept. 30 the State Theater, Washington D.C.

Tonight

Paul Toledo at RJTV Bar

Tomorrow

Bamboo, Kjwan and Sino Sikat, 8 p.m. Central Plaza, Eastwood City, Libis

"The Passion of Tango," a two-hour show depicting the drama and various forms of the famous Latin dance at Reunion Square, Adriatico St. Manila. Call 522-0403

MMTA
METRO MANILA
THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 (DOLBY) NO RESERVATIONS
2 (DOLBY) RESIDENT EVIL 3
3 (DOLBY) CHUCK & LARRY
4 (DOLBY) I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) THE BRAVE ONE

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 RESIDENT EVIL - 3
2 NO RESERVATIONS
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 CHUCK & LARRY

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 RESIDENT EVIL - 3
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
5 PLEASE CALL

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 6433994
1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 ROGUE ASSASIN
3 RESIDENT EVIL - 3
4 NO RESERVATIONS

THEATRES
1 SKINWALKERS
2 NANCY DREW
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 DAY WATCH
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 CHUCK & LARRY
2 RESIDENT EVIL - 3
3 UNDERDOG
4 NO RESERVATIONS
5 RESIDENT EVIL - 3
6 RESIDENT EVIL - 3
7 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
8 SHOOT THEM UP
9 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
10 ROGUE ASSASIN

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) RESIDENT EVIL - 3
2 (DOLBY) I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 (DOLBY) NO RESERVATIONS
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
5 RESIDENT EVIL - 3

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 PLEASE CALL
3 1408
4 UNDERDOG

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 RESIDENT EVIL - 3
3 NO RESERVATIONS

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 NANCY DREW
2 LAST LEGION

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY) I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 SKINWALKERS
3 (DTS) THE BRAVE ONE
4 CHUCK & LARRY

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
2 EVAN ALLMIGHTY

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) CHUCK & LARRY
2 (DOLBY) RESIDENT EVIL - 3
3 (DOLBY) NO RESERVATIONS
4 (DOLBY) I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 SHOOT THEM UP
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 RISE
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 DON'T LOOK BACK
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 THE INVASION

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 DISTURBIA
2 I KNOW WHO KILL ME
3 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 DAY WATCH

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 SHOOT THEM UP
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU
3 DAY WATCH

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 ZOMBIES
2 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 PLEASE CALL
2

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 1408
2 KIROT SA DIBDIB
3 LIBERATED
4 SHOOT THEM UP

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 RISE
2 KIRIDA
3 IVE FALLEN FOR YOU
4 TUKSO SI CHARITO
5 SHOOT THEM UP

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 PLEASE CALL
2
3
4

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 PLEASE CALL
2

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHOW TIME

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 NO RESERVATIONS MTRCB. GP 2.30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3 MTRCB. SUBJECT FOR RATING
3 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY MTRCB. R-13 1.00, 3.50, 6.40, 9:30
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU MTRCB. GP
PREMIERE THEATRE THE BRAVE ONE MTRCB R-13 1:15, 3.50, 6.25, 9.00
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice
Catch the Cineplex Special
The Most Awaited Fight is On!
The Will to Win "PACQUIAO vs BARRERA"
Super Featherweight Championship
on OCTOBER 7, 2007 (SUNDAY) - 8:00 AM (MANILA TIME)
Live Via Satellite from
Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada
Cinema Gates Open at 7:00 AM - Ticket Price : P 600.00
6th floor, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
EDSA corner Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
Call 633-7851, loc. 171/ 170 or 633-2227
for more details.
Shangri-La Plaza

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41
DOLBY DIGITAL

THE BRAVE ONE R13 12:30,255,5:20, 7:45,10:10	RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION 1:50,4:00,6:10, 8:20,10:30	I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK & LARRY - R13 12:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30
I ' VE FALLEN FOR YOU 1:30,3:40,5:50, 8:00,10:10	SHOOT 'EM UP R13 2:00,4:00,6:00,8:00	NO RESERVATIONS G 1:20,3:40,6:00, 8:20,10:30

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Eastwood City
proudly presents
The Members
Journey back in time as we take you on a musical ride, from the 60's all the way to the 80's
Watch 'The Members' pay tribute to these rock icons & more:
Jimi Hendrix Led Zeppelin The Cure The Doors
The Rolling Stones The Smiths The Shadows The Ventures
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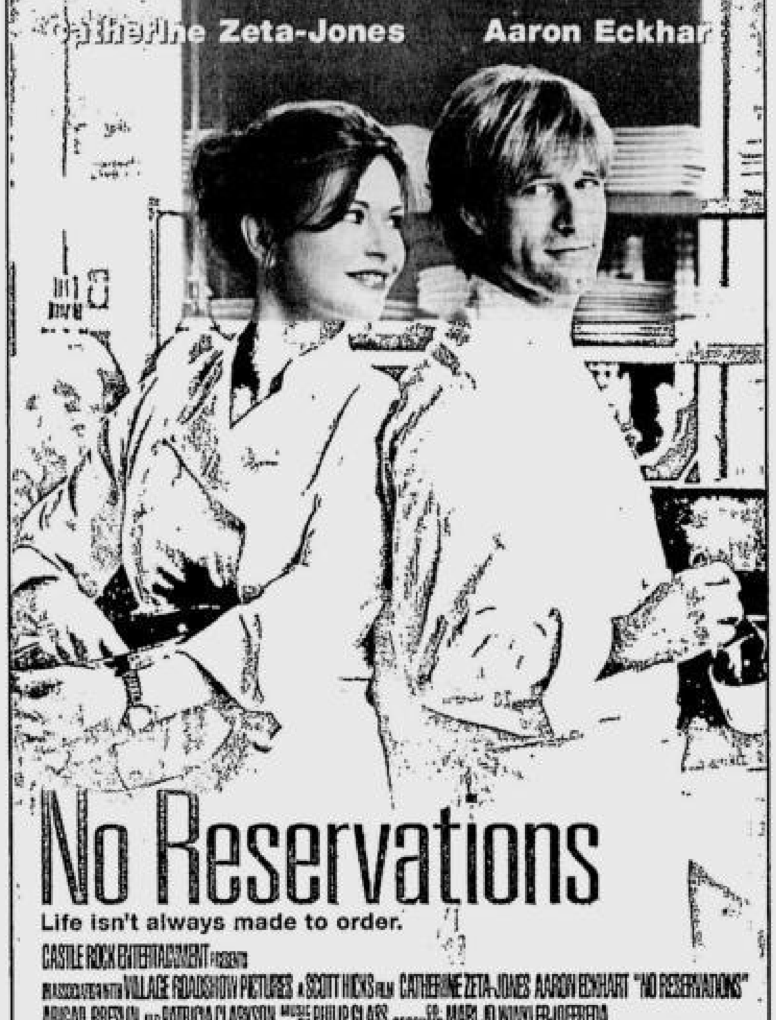
Eastwood Fuente Circle
Eastwood City
Tel 687-6770 to 74 • 0917-8 EWCITY

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
PACQUIAO VS BARRERA II
TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE
For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
1 I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY 2:15, 5:05, 7:55, 10:40 R-13
2 RESIDENT EVIL 3
3 NO RESERVATIONS 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 G
4 I'VE FALLEN FOR YOU 2:05, 4:35, 7:05, 9:50 G

NOW SHOWING
MTRCB G General Audience ALL AGES ADMITTED



No Reservations
Life isn't always made to order.
CASTLE ROCK ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH VILLAGE ROADSHOW PICTURES A SCOTT HICKS FILM CATHERINE ZETA-JONES AARON ECKHART "NO RESERVATIONS" ABIGAIL BRESLIN AND PATRICIA CLARKSON MUSIC BY PHILIP GLASS CO-PRODUCER MARI JO WINKLER-IOFFREDA EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS SUSAN CARTSONIS AND BRUCE BERMAN SCREENPLAY BY CAROL FUCHS PRODUCED BY KERRY HEYSEN SERGIO AGÜERO DIRECTED BY SCOTT HICKS
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#1 MOVIE IN AMERICA!
$24,168,865
HIGHEST 3-DAY WEEKEND GROSS (Sept. 21-23)

NOW SHOWING
We have witnessed the BEGINNING...
We have seen the APOCALYPSE...
Now we face EXTINCTION.
MILLA JOVOVICH
RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION

KATIE AND ANDERSON ARE GETTING MARRIED...
THEY JUST MET A FEW MINUTES AGO

JASON BIGGS ISLA FISHER
WEDDING DAZE

PMAP

The 44th PMAP ANNUAL CONFERENCE

People Management Association of the Philippines

September 26-28, 2007 • Waterfront Hotel, Lahug, Cebu City

PMAP 19 56

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER JOB Market

Inquirer Job Market

congratulates

People Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP)

on its 44th Annual Conference

JOIN THE BIGGEST EVENT FOR NURSES FOR 2007!

1st PHILIPPINE NURSING OPPORTUNITIES CONFERENCE & EXPO 2007

A World of Opportunity Awaits the Filipino Nurse

September 28-30, 2007, 10:00 am - 8:00 pm

MEGATRADE HALL 2 MEGAMALL
Mandaluyong City

Supported by:

Co-presented by: Globe

The Philippines is one of the best sources of nurses in the world because of the Filipino Nurses' innate professionalism and caring nursing care. Demand for Filipino Nurses overseas has therefore increased and with it, a corresponding increase in valuable remittances, significantly helping the economy of the country.

More than 69,000 nursing graduates took the June 2007 Nursing Licensure Exams. Add to this the more than 700,000 student nurses who aim to follow the success of Filipino Nurses ahead of them. The challenge to equal, if not surpass, burns strong.

Do you want to apply for NCLEX, IELTS the easy way? Do you want to pass the Local Board, NCLEX, CGFNS, IELTS in flying colors? Do you want to work in the US, UK, Canada, New Zealand, Australia? Need standby / extra financing for your Nursing studies? Do you need a business to help fund your Nursing Career?

KNOW MORE! ATTEND & PARTICIPATE! JUMPSTART YOUR NURSING CAREER!

EDGEWORTH REVIEW CENTER

JOB INQUIRER

A World of Opportunity Awaits the Filipino Nurse

Who Should Join?

- Nursing Review Centers (Local / NCLEX / CGFNS)
- English Proficiency Review Centers / IELTS Review Centers
- Companies deploying Nurses abroad
- Nursing Schools
- Medical Supplies & Equipment Suppliers
- Call Centers / Medical Transcription Schools / Companies
- Hospitals / Clinics
- Pharmaceutical Companies
- Health Maintenance Organizations
- Gym / Fitness / Wellness Centers
- Rehabilitation Centers
- Business / Franchising Companies who can offer business opportunities for Nurses
- Organizations offering training / additional courses for Nurses
- Hotels / Resorts / Airlines / Real Estate

Who Should Participate?

- Nursing Students
- Nursing Graduates
- Licensed Nurses

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inquiry@philnursingexpo.com
www.philnursingexpo.com

5th National Association for Appreciative Inquiry

"Growing Seeds of Possibilities" Conference

Appreciative Inquiry is based on a reverence for life and is essentially biocentric in character. It is an inquiry process that tries to apprehend the factors that give life to a living system and seeks to articulate those possibilities that can lead to a better future. More than a method or technique, the appreciative mode of inquiry is a means of living with, being with, and directly participating in the life of human systems in a way that compels one to inquire into the deeper life-generating essentials and potentials of organizational existence.

Dr. David L. Cooperrider
Positive Image, Positive Action

PROGRAM
7.30 a.m. Registration Commences

8.30 a.m. Opening Ceremonies
9.00 a.m. 'Growing Seeds of Micro Enterprise Initiatives' Dr. Jaime Aristotle B. Alip
9.30 a.m. Open Forum
10.00 am Workshop. Growth Possibilities for Small Initiatives @ the Grassroots

1.30 pm Business Meeting on AAI
2.00 pm 'Growing the Seeds for Enterprise Bottom-line Dr. Conchita L. Manabat
2.30 pm Open Forum
3.00 pm Workshop. Entry Possibilities for Appreciative Practice to Increase the Bottom-line

3.30 pm Reports of Small Groups

Dr. Jaime Aristotle B. Alip

- Founder/President—CARD-MRI
- President, RIMANSI Organization of the Phils.
- Member, Advisory Board, IDEAS
- Director, CASHPOR
- Awarded 'Most Distinguished Alumnus of University of the Philippines
- Awarded 'The Social Entrepreneur of the Year 2006.
- Awarded 'Excellence in Community Economic

Dr. Conchita L. Manabat

- Member, Board of Directors, Fujitsu Phils. Inc.
- Trustee, University of San Carlos
- Member, Consultative Advisory Group of the International Auditing & Assurance Standards Board (CAG of the IAASB) of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC)
- President, Development Center for Finance (joint undertaking between the UP College of Business Administration & FINEX Foundation.
- Former Chair & Founder, C.L. Manabat & Co.
- Former Managing Partner, C.L. Manabat & Co.
- Former Chair, Capital Market Development Council

October 19, 2007
8:00 am to 4:00 pm
Sky Lounge,
The Linden Suites
#37 San Miguel Ave.
Ortigas Center.

For questions about Appreciative Inquiry and the Conference, you may call any of the following:

- *Rose Fuentes @ 4266359*
- *Yim Cortez @ 6673587*
- *Virgie Castillo @ 6387337*
- *Reju Mandlayan @ 7297759*

Investment:
P3,000.00 (for non-AAI members)
P2,800.00 (AAI members/Early Birds *before 30 September 2007)*
Covers registration fees, meals, certificate of participation.

Please get in touch with.
Cynthia E. Cruz
Tel/Fax. 658-9302
Email ccruz@saidi.edu.ph

12th Year Anniversary

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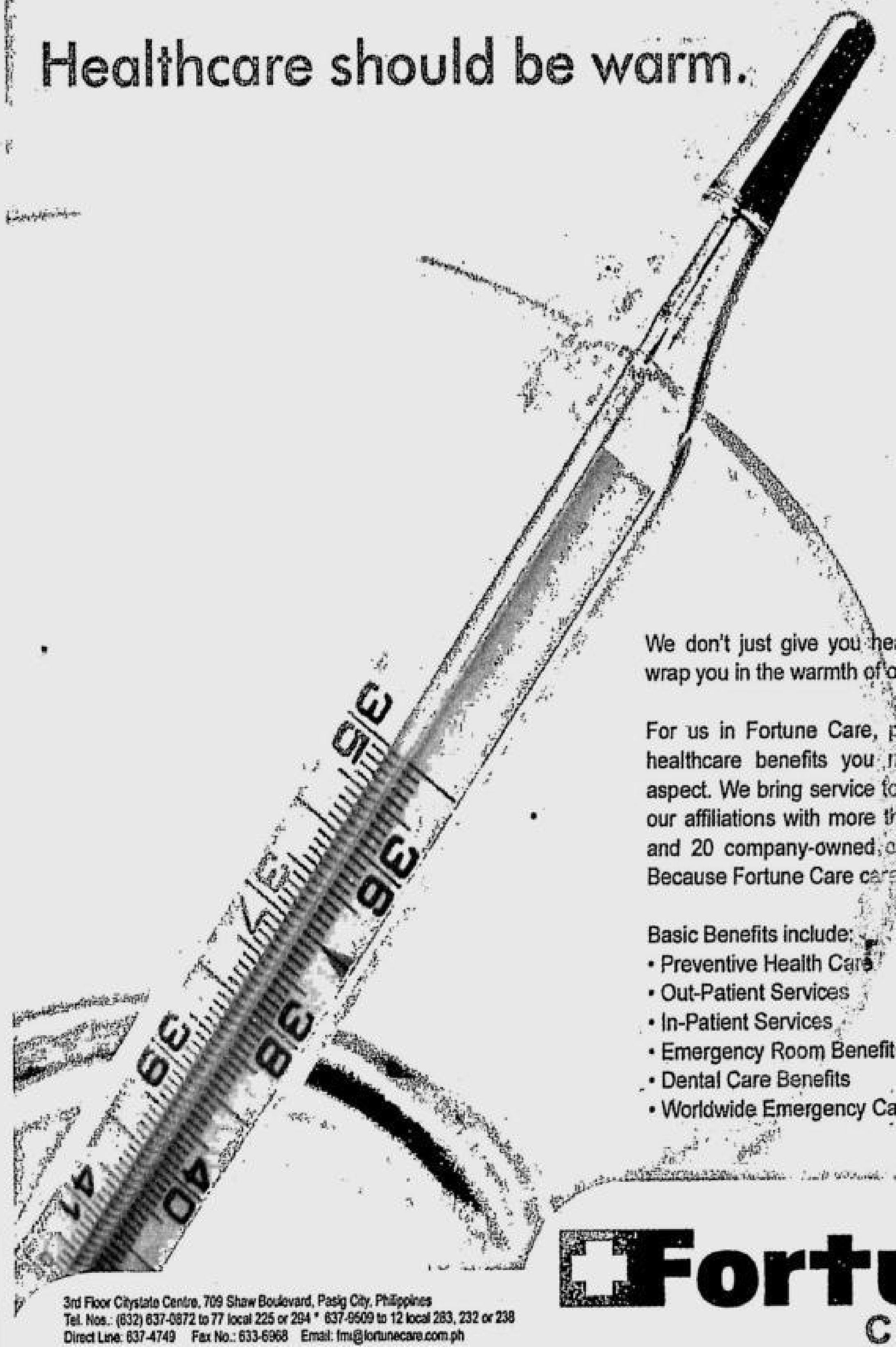

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NREA – HUDCC 12TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

A Better Outlook in Philippine Real Estate: "Building Local, Selling Global, Developing Green"

September 27-28, 2007 * Ayala Hall, Makati Sports Club, L. P. Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati City

1 9 9 1

Message

MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

Warmest greetings to the officers and members of the **National Real Estate Association, Inc. (NREA)** as you hold your ***12th Joint National Convention and Trade Exhibits*** in partnership with the ***Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC).***

Your theme, ***A Better Outlook in the Philippine Real Estate : "Building Local, Selling Global, Developing Green,"*** shows your willingness to upgrade your profession by setting up a venue where you can update your members on recent developments, trends, innovations and technologies in the real estate industry.

With more than 400 participants from the private and government sectors, I am confident that this 2-day event will be able to help our real estate developers and professionals in putting in place the infrastructure needed to attract more investments, create more jobs and beat poverty.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

Message

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the Vice President

I wish to congratulate the men and women of the National Real Estate Association (NREA) on the occasion of your **12th Joint National Convention and Trade Exhibits.**

The Convention theme, *A Better Outlook in the Philippine Real Estate: "Building Local, Selling Global, Developing Green,"* showcases not only NREA's laudable thrust towards a locally-based, globally-oriented real estate and housing development business but also its exemplary endeavors to set the impetus for the development of environment-friendly communities and settlements.

NREA's long-term devotion to real estate and housing has no doubt resulted in the advancement and expansion of relationships among the key players in the realty industry and its allied fields, thus contributing immensely to their renewed vitality and viability not only within our shores but also across international borders.

I therefore extol NREA for its continuing efforts at putting more premium to the protection of our ecology in all its current undertakings and upcoming ventures such that the citizenry is not only assured of decent and adequate housing and secure land tenure but also an environment that is habitable and free from man-made perils and human-inflicted destructions.

MABUHAY!

NOLI "KABAYAN" DE CASTRO

Messages

1 9 9 1

NATIONAL REAL ESTATE ASSOCIATION, INC.
(The One-Stop Trade Organization)

The 12th NREA-HUDCC National Convention & Trade Exhibits is an opportune event. It is held at a time when the property and housing industry is enjoying growth unparalleled in over a decade.

It is a testament to the leadership of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who has adopted housing both as a strategy for economic development and in uplifting the plight of the homeless and the low-income workers.

These are ably implemented by no less than Vice President Noli "Kabayan" de Castro who emphasized the importance of shelter provision, by serving as the ***housing czar***, in his capacity as concurrent Chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC).

The country's strong economic fundamentals achieved under the Arroyo administration have provided the impetus to the surge of the property development sector.

The policy and program initiatives of Vice President de Castro have catalyzed the synergy between the government shelter agencies and the private sector towards housing success.

Mabuhay!

JOSE V. MANALAD
Chairman

- oOo -

Together with the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council and its housing agencies, the National Real Estate Association is holding the 12th NREA-HUDCC National Housing Convention and Trade Exhibits.

Today, the real estate and property sector is at the crest of growth, a far cry from the boom-and-bust cycle of the past decade. We also note local developers building for the global market, by reaching out to Filipino communities worldwide, who continue to sustain housing growth with their investments.

The convention will serve to celebrate the government and private sector partnership that provided the platform for resurgence of housing.

We hope to chronicle the factors as well as further share with industry stakeholders the information and technological advances that have impelled the surge of the property sector.

We also hope to identify and build upon the specific areas of cooperation with the government housing agencies.

By so doing, we can further boost housing as an engine of socio-economic development.

ALEJANDRO S. MAÑALAC
National President

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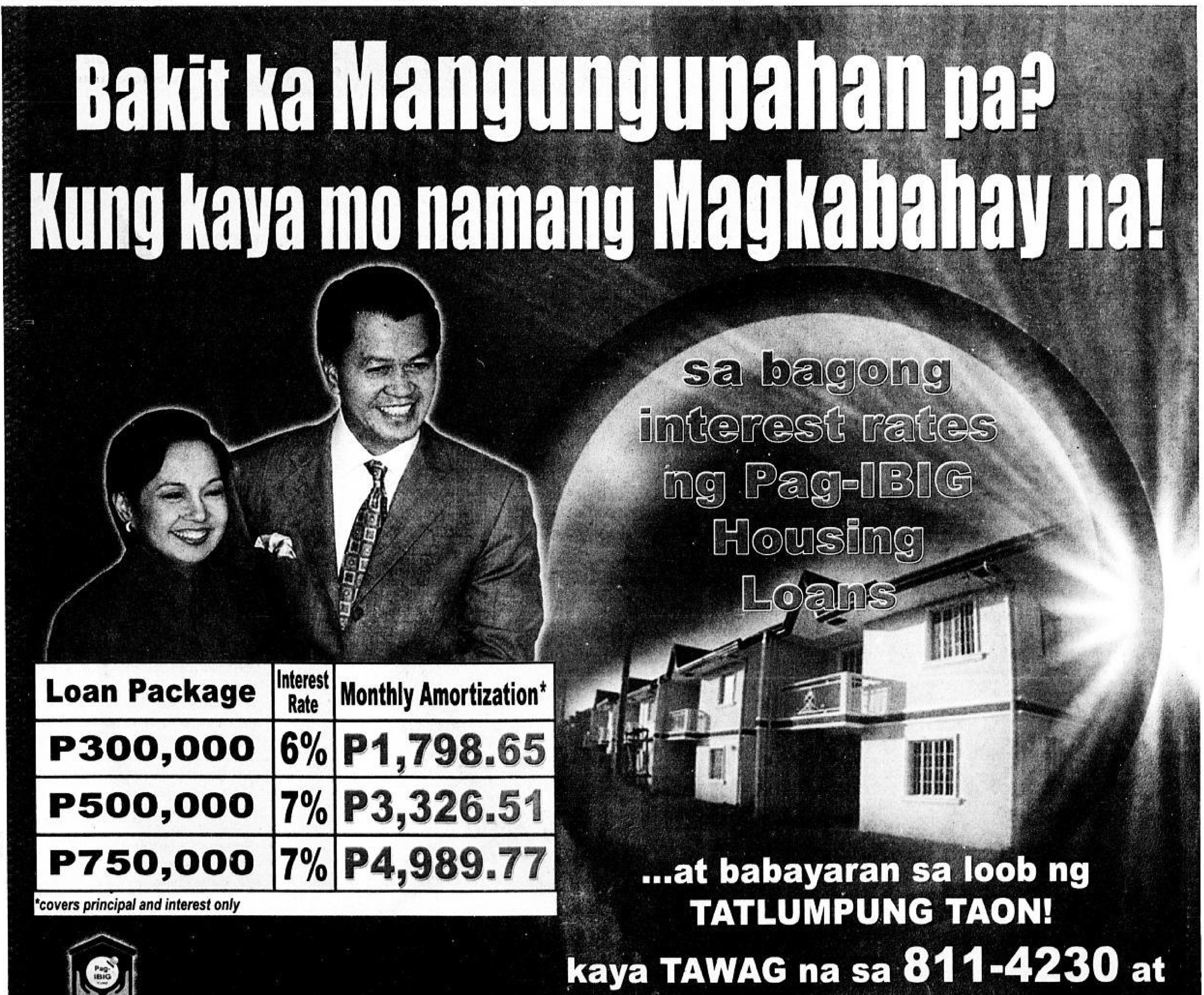
NATIONAL HOME MORTGAGE FINANCE CORPORATION
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY
glorietta
Ayala Malls



Bakit ka Mangungupahan pa? Kung kaya mo namang Magkabahay na!

sa bagong interest rates ng Pag-IBIG Housing Loans

Loan Package	Interest Rate	Monthly Amortization*
P300,000	6%	P1,798.65
P500,000	7%	P3,326.51
P750,000	7%	P4,989.77

*covers principal and interest only

...at babayaran sa loob ng TATLUMPUNG TAON!

kaya TAWAG na sa **811-4230** at **724-4244 (Pag-IBIG)**

Matatag na haligi ng inyong kinabukasan

NREA - HUDCC 12th NATIONAL CONVENTION

September 27-28 2007 * Ayala Hall, Makati Sports Club, L P. Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati City

Theme : *A Better Outlook in Philippine Real Estate :*
"Building Local, Selling Global, Developing Green"

P R O G R A M M E

DAY 1 - 27 SEPTEMBER 2007 (THURSDAY)

8:00 a.m. REGISTRATION
9:00 a.m. OPENING SESSION
Philippine National Anthem
Member Jaime B. Memije
Opening Prayer
Ms. Velma N. Abuzo
Welcome Remarks
NREA President Alejandro S. Mañalac
Introduction of the Guest of Honor
NREA Chairman Jose V. Manalad
9:40 a.m. Speech of the Guest of Honor
Vice President Noli L. de Castro
Chairman, Housing & Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC)
10:00 a.m. OVERVIEW OF THE CONVENTION THEME
Atty. Gilda C. Lim
Overall Convention Chairperson
NREA Executive Vice President
10:10 a.m. WORKSHOP 1: PHILIPPINE REAL ESTATE: GLOBAL DEMOGRAPHICS AND THEIR REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT IMPLICATIONS
Chairlady: Arch. Ma. Ysolde A. Flores – Prado
Sr. Manager, AEDD of Federal Land, Inc.
Introduction of Workshop Topic and Speakers
10:20 a.m. First Presentation
A PLAN FOR TOMORROW: Creating Stronger and Healthier Communities
Speaker: Mr. Apollo B. Tanco
Project Development Head
Greenfields, Ayala Land, Inc.
10:50 a.m. Second Presentation
HIGH DENSITY DEVELOPMENT:
Myths and Facts (Interactive Discussion)
Panelists: Architect Felino A. Palafox, Jr.
MMDA Chairman Bayani F. Fernando
11:30 a.m. OPEN FORUM
Moderator: Architect Placido M. Calma
President, PMC Construction Corp.
11:45 a.m. RECOGNITION OF CONNECTING COMMUNITIES AWARDEES
12:00 Noon LUNCHEON
1:30 p.m. WORKSHOP 2: DEVELOPING GREEN: INTEGRATING SUSTAINABILITY WITH SUCCESS
Chairman: Ms. Marissa del Mar
VP – Finance, NREA
Introduction of Workshop Topics and Speakers
2:00 p.m. First Presentation
GREEN BUILDING + SMART GROWTH = SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
Speaker: Architect Amado De Jesus
Chairman Board of Judges, ASEAN Energy Awards
Founding Chair, Green Architecture Movement
2:30 p.m. Second Presentation
TELECOMMUNICATION ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Speaker: Mr. Jose Antonio Mapa
Head, Broadband & Landline Group
Innove Communication, Inc.
3:00 p.m. Third Presentation
CURRENT PROGRAM OF HGC
Speaker: Mr. Gonzalo Benjamin A. Bongolan
President, Home Guaranty Corporation
3:30 p.m. COFFEE BREAK
4:00 p.m. Fourth Presentation
BPOs/KPOs ON THE RISE
Speaker : Mr. Jose Rodovan III
Vice Chairman, CB Richard Ellis Phils., Inc.
4:30 p.m. Fifth Presentation
STANDARDS FOR RETIREMENT FACILITIES AND SERVICES
Speaker : General Edgar B. Aglipay (Ret)
Chairman, Philippine Retirement Authority
5:00 p.m. *Reactor : Mr. Bansan C. Choa*
Director, Philippine Retirement, Inc.
5:20 p.m. OPEN FORUM
Moderator : Ms. Lucia V. Ferrer
NREA Vice President for Internal Affairs
Day Chairmen & Emcees : *Dr. Dante V. Liban, Ph.D.*
Ms. Ma. Mercedita B. Tabafunda
6:00 p.m. WINE & CHEESE / COCKTAILS
NREA CHAPTERS' NIGHT
Congressman Rodolfo G. Valencia
Chairman, Committee on Housing & Urban Development

DAY 2 - 28 SEPTEMBER 2007 (FRIDAY)

9:30 a.m. WORKSHOP 3: TECHNOLOGY: UNPLUGGED
Chairman: Architect Ronie B. Blando
CIO, Palafox Associates
Introduction of Workshop Topic and Speakers
9:40 a.m. First Presentation:
IDENTIFYING & CONNECTING WITH THE GLOBAL MARKET
Speaker: Architect Nestor S. Mangio
Chairman, Clark International Airport Corp.
10:10 a.m. Second Presentation
EFFECT OF HOUSING BOOM ON TAX COLLECTION
Speaker : Atty. Nelson M. Aspe
OIC, Deputy Commissioner (Operations Group), Bureau of Internal Revenue
10:40 a.m. Third Presentation
HOW TO APPLY FOR A U.S. VISA (Tourist Visa)
Speaker: Mr. Ron Dizon
Visa Consultant, ET Dizon Travel Corp.
11:10 a.m. Fourth Presentation
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS INCENTIVES
Speaker : Director Rafaelito H. Taruc
Infrastructure Services & Other Industrial Product Department
11:40 a.m. OPEN FORUM
Moderator: Ms. Emely S. Medina
National Trustee, NREA
Or / INTERACTIVE SESSIONS (Actual Connection) with Overseas Marketing Group (check time difference – U.S. Italy, Canada, Dubai...etc.)
12:30 p.m. LUNCHEON
1:30 p.m. WORKSHOP 4: REAL ESTATE MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT
Chairman : Director Janet E. Cruz
Coordination, Monitoring & Evaluation Group, HUDCC
Introduction of Workshop Topics and Speakers
2:00 p.m First Presentation
A BETTER PACKAGE FOR A BETTER FUTURE (30 Years Payment with lower interest rates)
Speaker: Atty. Romero Federico S. Quimbo
President, Pag-IBIG Fund
2:30 p.m. Second Presentation
SECONDARY MORTGAGE MARKET IN THE PHILIPPINES
Speaker: Atty. Joseph Peter Sison
President, National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation
3:00 p.m. Third Presentation
PROTECTION OF BUYERS AND INCENTIVES PROGRAM
Speaker : Commissioner Romulo Q. Fabul
Housing & Land Use Regulatory Board
3:30 p.m. COFFEE BREAK
3:45 p.m. Fourth Presentation
COMPELLING PROMOTION & ADVERTISING EFFORTS
Speaker : Mr. Jesse Rebustillo
Head, Classified Ads of Phil. Daily Inquirer
4:00 p.m. Fifth Presentation
TAKING THE NEXT STEPS
(REAL ESTATE FORECAST – CYCLE 2008)
4:30 p.m. OPEN FORUM
Moderator : Mr. Zacarias Abanez
Director, Policies & Programs Development Group, HUDCC
Day Chairmen & Emcees : *Mr. Ernesto A. Rioveros*
Ms. Janet E. Cruz

CLOSING REMARKS AND THE NREA PLANS FOR THE YEAR.....

HOUSING AND LAND USE REGULATORY BOARD
HLURB Bldg., Kalayaan cor. Mayaman St.,
Diliman, Quezon City

Mga Dapat Tandaan Kung Bibili ng Bahay at Lupa o Condominium Unit sa Isang Developer o Broker.

Bago Bumili

1. Alamin sa owner/developer/brokers/salesmen kung ang project ay naka rehistro at may license to sell sa HOUSING LAND USE REGULATORY BOARD (HLURB). Malalaman ito sa website na (www.hlurb.gov.ph / Information Technology Group-ITG, 9272698; 9272731; 4344168) ang listahan ng mga project na may License to Sell, o di kaya ay magtungo sa pinakamalapit na tanggapan ng HLURB upang malaman kung ito ay may "license to sell". Kalakip nito ang pangalan ng Regional Officers at addresses at numero ng telepono ng Regional Offices.
   Kapag may license to sell na po nangangahulugan na pwede na kayong bumili ng unit sa nasabing developer.
2. Alamin sa broker kung siya ay naka rehistro sa HLURB.
3. Alamin sa kopya ng License to sell ng developer kung kailan tatapusin ang proyekto.
4. Alamin kung nakasanla ang proyekto at kung ito ba ay may pahintulot ng HLURB.
5. Alamin kung nagkakatugma ang brochure at advertisement sa approved plan ng project. (Makikita ito sa project docket sa HLURB)
6. Alamin kung saan ang kinalalalyuang lugar ng bibilhing bahay.

Kapag Bibili na

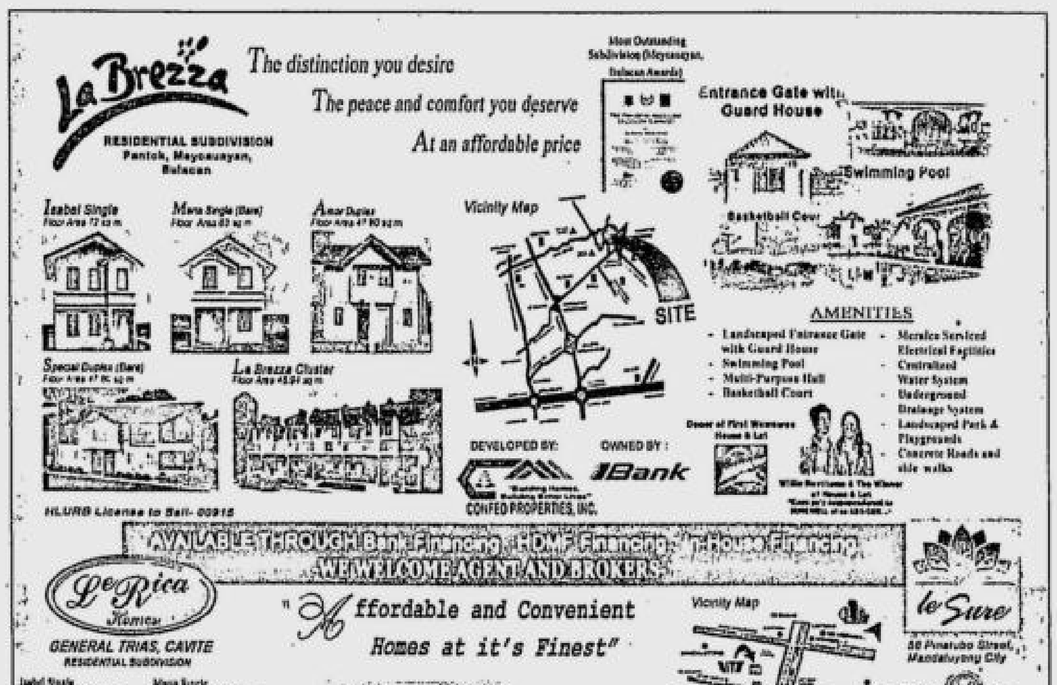
1. Alamin kung kaya ng budget nyo ang equity at buwanang hulugan.
2. Alamin kung hindo substandard ang materyales ng bahay, at ito ay sang-ayon sa approved specifications. (Makikita sa project docket sa HLURB)
3. Alamin ang mga basic necessities kagaya ng ilaw at tubig, drainage, open space, etc. (Makikita din sa project docket sa HLURB)
4. Alamin kung kasama sa presyo ng housing unit ang halaga ng water system at kung sino ang magpapatakbo nito, electric meter, pagpabakod ng proyekto, etc.
5. Alamin kung isa lang kayong magmamayari nito, at hinde nabenta na sa iba ang property.
6. Tiyakin na ang contract to sell ay irerehistro ng developer sa Registry of Deeds.

Bago Pumirma ng Contract to Sell

1. Tingnan ang maliliit na letra ng kontrata at basahin mabuti ang lahat ng nakasaad dito
2. Huwag pipirma sa blangkong papel
3. Alamin ang taong otorizadong tumanggap ng paunang bayad (equity) at buwanang bayad. (monthly installments)
4. Humingi ng official receipt ng owner/developer sa binayad na halaga at kopya ng kontrata.

HLURB Regional Officers with Office Address and Telephone Number

Cordillera Administrative Region -	REBECCA F. TORRES Regional Officer, RFO CAR Leonard Wood Road Botanical Garden, Baguio City Tel. No. 074-442-5338 E-mail torres@hlurb.gov.ph	Region I -	DIR. TERESITA V. GALACGAC Regional Officer, RFO I 4F Ames Abaya Building Rizal St., San Fernando, La Union Tel. No. 072-242-6355 072-888-2658 E-mail tgalacgac@hlurb.gov.ph
Region II -	ANTONIO P. URATA Regional Officer, RFO II 3/F Linquoco Building (RCBC) Cor. Bonifacio & Arellano Sts. Tuguegarao, Cagayan Tel. No. 078-846-6296; 078-846-1922 E-mail aurata@hlurb.gov.ph	Region III -	EDITHA U. BARRAMEDA Regional Officer RFO III 2F Dand Building Mac-Arthur Highway cor. Dolores St., San Fernando, Pampanga Tel. No. 045-861-2665; 045-963-7376 E-mail ebarrameda@hlurb.gov.ph
Region IVA -	DIR. BELEN G. CENIZA Regional Officer, RFO IV-A Belmont Place, No. 5 Anonas Project 3, Quezon City Tel. No. 912-7229 E-mail: bceniza@hlurb.gov.ph	Region IVB -	DIR. ALFREDO M. TAN II Regional Officer RFO IV-B Rm. 304 3rd Flr. Topaz Building 99 Kamias Road, Quezon City Tel. No. 928-8440; 928-8445 E-mail: atan@hlurb.gov.ph
Expanded National Capital Region -	DIR. JESSE A. OBLIGACION Regional Officer, RFO NCR 2F HLURB Bldg., Kalayaan Ave. Diliman, Quezon City Tel. No. 926-10-61 E-mail ejsa@hlurb.gov.ph	Region V -	FLORENCIO P. TINGZON, JR. Regional Officer, RFO V 3/F Insular Building, Rizal St. Legaspi City Tel. No. 052-820-2712; 052-481-1622 E-mail ftingzon@hlurb.gov.ph
Region VI -	PILAR J. JAMANDRE Regional Officer, RFO VI Rm. 302, 3/F Golden Commercial Center Iznart Street, Iloilo City Tel. No. 033-335-0049; 033-509-9838 E-mail 1: hlurb6@mozcom.com E-mail 2: pjamandre@hlurb.gov.ph E-mail 2: adecatoria@hlurb.gov.ph	Region VII -	DIR. ANTONIO B. DECATORIA SR. Regional Officer, RFO VII L.D.M. Building, Mezzanine Cor. M.J. Cuenco Avenue & Legaspi Sts. Cebu City Tel. No. 032-254-4564; 032-254-2854 E-mail 1. hlurb7@cebu.weblinq.com
Region XIII -	LOURDES A. NACINO Officer-in-Charge, RFO VIII Rm. 303-304 TCS Building Burgos St., Tacloban City Tel. No. 053-321-3062, 053-523-4480 E-mail lnacino@hlurb.gov.ph	Region IX -	ELIZABETH A. BUENO Regional Officer RFO IX City Government Complex Petit Barracks, Zamboanga City Tel. No. 062-991-3973, 062-993-2737 E-mail ebueno@hlurb.gov.ph
Region X -	EVANGELINE B. AGAN Regional Officer, RFO X Waterside Living Complex J. Pacana A. Velez Street Lapasan, Cagayan de Oro City Tel. No. 082-856-6688; 0882-272-1456 E-mail 1 hlurb10@hlurb.gov.ph E-mail 2 eagan@hlurb.gov.ph	Region XI -	ROY T. LOPEZ Regional Officer, RFO XI 3/F C. Villa Abrille Building No. 7 J.P. Laurel Ave. Davao City Tel. No. 082-222-2895, 082-225-3875 E-mail rlopez@hlurb.gov.ph
Region XII -	NORMAN S. DATUKON Regional Officer, RFO XII 3/F KSES Building Roxas Street, Koronadal City Tel. No. 083-228-9668 E-mail ndatukon@hlurb.gov.ph	Region XIII -	CHARITO A. RAAGAS Regional Officer, RFO CARAGA Alofa Tiu Building II J. Rosales Avenue, Butuan City Tel. No. 085-341-5854; 085-815-0295 E-mail craagas@hlurb.gov.ph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At an affordable price
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Swimming Pool
Basketball Court
Isabel Single
Maria Single (Bare)
Amor Duplex
Vicinity Map
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Special Duplex (Bare)
La Brezza Cluster
AMENITIES
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- Swimming Pool
- Multi-Purpose Hall
- Basketball Court
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- Centralized Water System
- Underground Drainage System
- Landscaped Park & Playgrounds
- Concrete Roads and side walks
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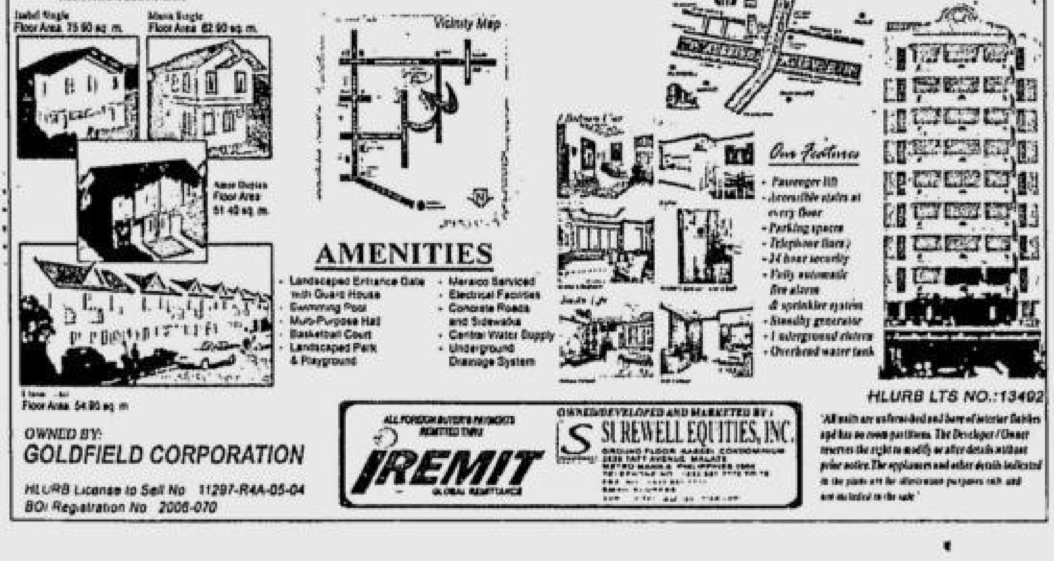
WE WELCOME AGENT AND BROKERS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GENERAL TRIAS, CAVITE
RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION
"Affordable and Convenient Homes at it's Finest"
Isabel Single
Floor Area 75.60 sq. m.
Maria Single
Floor Area 62.60 sq. m.
Amor Duplex
Floor Area 51.40 sq. m.
Floor Area 54.80 sq. m
Vicinity Map
AMENITIES
- Landscaped Entrance Gate with Guard House
- Swimming Pool
- Multi-Purpose Hall
- Basketball Court
- Landscaped Park & Playground
- Meralco Serviced Electrical Facilities
- Concrete Roads and Sidewalks
- Central Water Supply
- Underground Drainage System
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56 Pinatubo Street, Mandaluyong City
Vicinity Map
Our Features
- Passenger lift
- Accessible stairs at every floor
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- 24 hour security
- Fully automatic fire alarm & sprinkler system
- Standby generator
- Underground cistern
- Overhead water tank
HLURB LTS NO.:13492
ALL FOREIGN BUYER'S PAYMENTS REMITTED THRU
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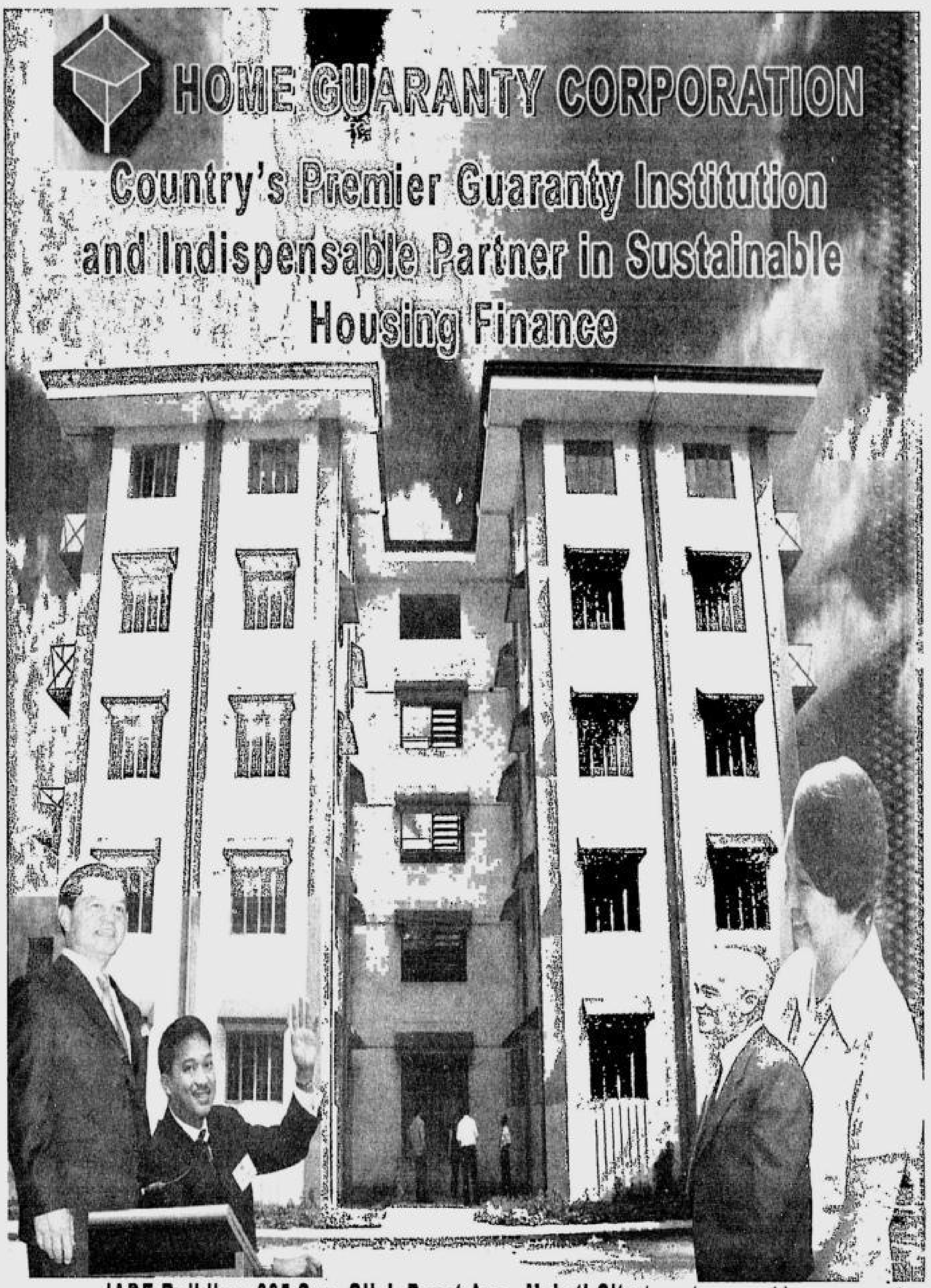
GLOBAL REMITTANCE
OWNED/DEVELOPED AND MARKETED BY:
SUREWELL EQUITIES, INC.

NREA – HUDCC 12TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

September 27-28, 2007 * Ayala Hall, Makati Sports Club, L. P. Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati City


HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION
Country's Premier Guaranty Institution and Indispensable Partner in Sustainable Housing Finance

JADE Building, 335 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave., Makati City (www.hgc.gov.ph)

NATIONAL HOME MORTGAGE FINANCE CORPORATION

HOUSING AGENCY CUTS FEES TO RENEW DELINQUENT HOMELOANS

In line with the vision of Vice President Noli de Castro, concurrent Chairman of the Housing and Urban Development and Coordinating Council (HUDCC), to bring benefits of loan relief to the economically-distressed housing borrowers and in order to encourage them to renew their delinquent loans and afford the monthly payments, the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC) has waived the previously-required downpayment equivalent to 10% of the gross interest-bearing portion of the restructured loan.

The NHMFC Management announced that in lieu of the 10% downpayment, the borrower needs only to pay a minimum of P1,000.00 plus all unpaid housing insurance premiums.

These include premiums for the Home Contributory Fund (HCF) and Home Finance Corporation (HFC) premiums in case of Folio I accounts.

In a maximized effort to reconfigurate its collection sytem for a more intensified collection servicing, NHMFC has also made the payment of Real Estate Tax as an optional requirement for submission in applying for the Special Repayment Program (SRP).

SRP allows the restructuring of all housing loan accounts that are in arrears, including all other accounts which have previously availed of the regular loan restructuring program under R.A. 8501 and retains the interest rate of the original loan, with affordable monthly amortizations payable for at least 15 years, or the remaining term of the loan, whichever is longer.

For particulars, all interested borrowers may visit or communicate with NHMFC's Collection and Accounts Management Group, located at 2nd Floor, Filomena Bldg., 104 Amorsolo Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City with Tel Nos. 817-6023/893-1501 loc. 340. For regional accounts, they may visit or communicate to any NHMFC satellite office nearest them.

The Lord is my Shepherd
There is nothing I shall want.
Psalm 23

Juanita "Aning" Cho. Santos del Val

June 24, 1926 – September 24, 2007

Graciously went home to God and her loving husband **Honorio "Yoyong" del Val**. She will always be remembered as a loving mother to **Eve, Joji, Raymund & Bing, Loy & Noel, Maryrose & Jon, Francis & Marisa.**

Caring Lola to **Adam, Elaine, JR, Jonathan, Robbie, Carlos, Brian, Pauline, Paolo** and **Isabel.**

Affectionate Great Grandma to **Nathan, Marc, Charles & Nicole Hollmann.**

Viewing is at Sanctuario de San Jose, Greenhills, San Juan.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 29, 2007 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at St. Francis Church, Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City.

ZORAIDA MAGNO MANGAHAS

Peacefully joined our Creator on September 25, 2007 at the age of 80.

Her loving husband **Geronimo** (†), children **Belinda & Arthur** (†), **Percival, Imelda & Val** and **Jun**; grandchildren **Oliver, Cheryl, Bryan** and **Natnat**; give thanks to the Lord for the blessing of her life.

Her remains lie in state at Superior Chapel, La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on September 29, 2007, at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City after the 8:30 a.m. Mass.

Our Beloved

Col. Leonardo Umandal Atienza

of Dasmariñas, Cavite

Died in the peace of the Lord on September 12, 2007 at the age of 67.

His wife, **Sonia** and his children, **Paul, Philamer, Publio, & Portia**, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

"Whoever serves Me must follow Me, and where I am, My servant also will be."
John 12:16

Mrs. Marcelina S. Lumayag – Apellido

Peacefully joined her Creator on the 23rd of September 2007 at the age of 90.

Her bereaved children Betty and Jun B. Factora; Renee and Fred A. Cruz; Libby A. Soriano; Naty and Marin A. Castro; Terry A. Daguio; Benny and Pete V. Limsiaco; Mely and Ver J. Santiago; brother, Marcelino and sister, Teofila, nephews and nieces; grandchildren and great-grandchildren and other relatives request for your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Sanctuarium, 739 G. Araneta Avenue near Quezon Blvd., Quezon City.

Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City on Saturday, September 29, 2007 after the 12:30 p.m. Holy Mass.

Death Notice

Amelia Mistades Dumagat

Died Sept. 26, 2007 at the age of 65.

Her body lies in state at her residence at 1958 J. Patino St., Sta. Ana, Manila.

Date of interment will be announced later at South Cemetery, Makati City.

Milagros San Pedro Macalino

Died on Sept. 23, 2007 at the age of 72.

Her remains lie in state at Dulce Funeral Homes, Jose Abad Santos cor. Dinalupihan St., Tondo, Manila.

Interment will be on September 29, Saturday, 10:00 a.m. at Eternal Garden Memorial Park, Balintawak, Q.C.

For any inquiries, you may contact Corazon or Elizabeth Macalino at cel. No. 09274688832.

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Memories

A special pullout section for the Eternal Care Industry

An 8-page, full color, tabloid-sized supplement published for All Saints' Day. The perfect medium for funeral parlor, columbariums, insurance companies, memorial parks and other eternal care-related products and services.

It will be published on October 28, 2007 and will be distributed with the Inquirer. Free copies will also be given to select memorial parks, funeral parlor, columbariums, on November 1, 2007.

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NERIO A. DAPUL

October 16, 1924 – September 25, 2007

Batangueño, son of a Caminero, Brilliant Litigation Lawyer, BIR Career Officer of known probity & integrity, war veteran, kulambo vendor, devoted father and husband.

Tatay Nerio passed away at 5:45 AM in Makati Medical Center after a prolonged battle with prostatic cancer. His family & friends join in prayer for his eternal repose in heaven.

His mortal remains lie in state at the family residence in Alitagtag, Batangas.

Interment will be on Saturday, 6 October 2007 at Alitagtag Cemetery after the 1 p.m. Mass.

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.

Tel. Nos. : 712-3001 • 749-3806 to 11

NAME OF DECEASED	PLACE OF VIEWING	INTERMENT/CREMATION	
		DATE & TIME	PLACE
Anastacio V. Sebastian	Chapel – 7.	27 Sept. 2007	Urbiztondo, Pangasinan
Basilia "Cely" M. Abeleda	Chapel – D	8:30 a.m. 27 Sept. 2007	Himlayang Pilipino
Zoraida M. Mangahas	Superior Chapel	after the 8:30 a.m. Mass – 29 Sept. 07	Manila Mem. Park, Parañaque

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

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(PDI - Sept. 27, 2007)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
LOCAL CIVIL REGISTRY OFFICE
PROVINCE: CEBU
CITY/MUNICIPALITY: CEBU CITY

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with Section 5 of R A 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that ROMMEL CABILDO KHO has filed with this Office a PETITION FOR CHANGE OF FIRST NAME, from ROMEO to ROMMEL in the certificate of live birth of ROMEO CABILDO KHO, who was born on DECEMBER 14, 1958 in CALOOCAN CITY, RIZAL whose parents are ZOTICO FORTICH KHO and ESPERANZA BALATBAT CABILDO.

Any person adversely affected by said petition may within ten (10) calendar days from date hereof or within seven (7) days from the last day of publication, file his/her written opposition with this office

Cebu City. September 18 2007

(Sgd.) ATTY. EVANGELINE T. ABATAYO
City Civil Registrar

(PDI - Sept. 20 & 27, 2007)

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UNO-Recoletos honors top silver jubilarians

UNO-R (University of Negros Occidental–Recoletos), Bacolod City honors its TOP SILVER JUBILARIANS on its 61st General Assembly and Homecoming on Sept. 29. Shown are (from left) Ging L. Igual (Human Resources Dev't), Dr. Ric Torres (Medicine), and Ken Alvarado (Aviation). Hosts are Class '82 as Silver Jubilarians and Class'57 as Golden Jubilarians.

PhilHealth declares unethical medical practice an offense

TO FINALLY CURB THE RAMPANT abuses of some health care providers, the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) announced that abuses and unethical practices will soon be considered offenses that may lead to the providers' disaccreditation.

Lawyer Valentin C. Guanio, Senior Vice President for Legal Services and Officer-in-charge of the Office of the Acting President and CEO said that PhilHealth is seriously considering abuses and unethical practices of doctors as among the qualified offenses that may warrant the non-renewal of their accreditation.

Emphasizing that PhilHealth is primarily concerned with the members' welfare, Guanio added that it is currently investigating cases of rampant abuse of the medical profession being carried out by some doctors through so-called medical missions afterwhich they file their claims for reimbursements through the accredited hospitals in their area. "We are already following up on some leads to enable us to get to the root of the matter soonest."

Without PhilHealth accreditation, these doctors can no longer file for reimbursements.

Guanio said that penalties for such offenses will similarly be increased and other policy changes will soon be introduced to further strengthen PhilHealth's campaign against abuse of medical authority.

He also clarified earlier figures on the PhilHealth reimbursement for cataract extractions, saying that PhilHealth pays an average of P18,373.00 for cataract extraction claims.

He added that indeed, it is possible for a skilled ophthalmologist to perform more than a hundred cataract extractions in a month, but stressed that doctors performing multiple extractions in a day under unhealthy circumstances run the risk of infecting, rather than curing, the patients.

DepEd
O-HERO

MANILA DENTAL SOCIETY LAUNCHES OHERO PROJECT

The Philippine Dental Association – Manila Chapter had a grand launching of its special project – OHERO Program (Oral Health Education Reform Order) at Epifanio delos Santos Elementary School (EDSES) host School in Singalong, Malate, Manila on Aug. 29. This is a comprehensive Oral Health Program designed for grade one pupils of public elementary school in six districts of City of Manila. Manila Dental Society is being supported by Hapee Toothpaste and the Rotary Club of Manila Metro to sustain this noble project. Witnessing the event are (from left) Ms. Carmen Siao (EDSES Principal), Dr. Ponciano Menguito (Asst. Superintendent of Div. of City School) Frank Malamug (Professional Marketing Consultant of Lamoiyan Corporation), Dr. Sixta Simeon (Chief of Dental Health Services) Dr. Marie Lorraine M. Sanchez (City Health Officer), Fernando Marcelo (Asst. Chief of Staff of Mayor Alfredo Lim), Dr. Roberto M. Tajonera (President of Manila Dental Society), Dr. Angelo Fernandez (PDA Vice President for Luzon South) and Carlos Chianpian (President Rotary Club of Manila Metro. Not in photo is Dr. Lillian Choa (MDS EVP and Chair of O-HERO).